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#### **FEATURES**

The Last Pinup By MICHAEL ANGELI

WOMEN She can change her eyes, she can change her hair, and she can change her shape. But America's high-end cover girl may not have the will to resist one man's shocking proposal.

The Trash-Talking Triumph of the Bad Chuck By Mark Jacobson 90 S P O R T S Bleeding from a thousand politically correct arrows, the unabashed Charles Barkley can still talk himself into a corner. Only these days, the jabbering colossus of Phoenix is better than ever at dribbling out of it.

Our Man in the White House BY WALTER SHAPIRO

POLITICS Pulling an all-nighter to get the job done may work in college, but is it a mature way to run the country? Esquire's inaugural dispatch from inside the Oval Office by our Washington correspondent.

Noir Town TELEVISION Bruce Wagner and Oliver Stone have seen TV's future and society's ultimate demise: Wild Palms.

The Accountant By ETHAN CANIN

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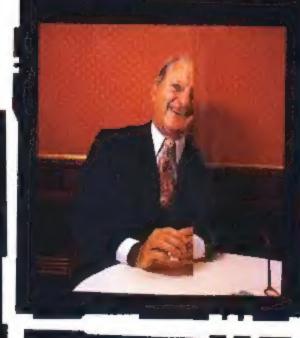
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## Ernest Hemingway named one of my father's drinks. My father had a few names for Hemingway, too.

people would come not because we were famous, but because we gave them our best.

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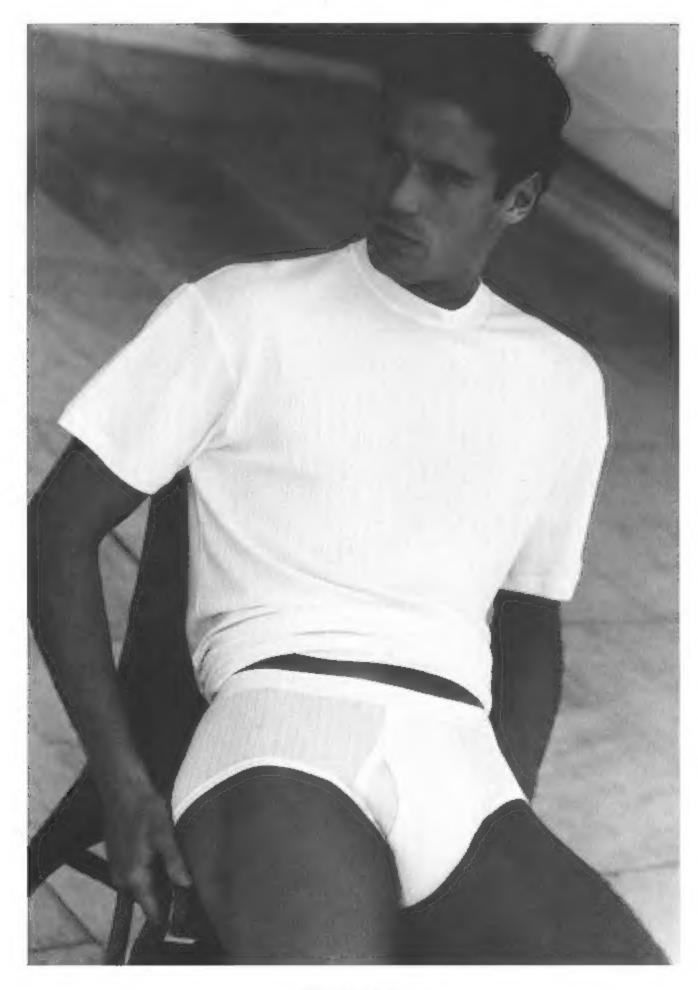
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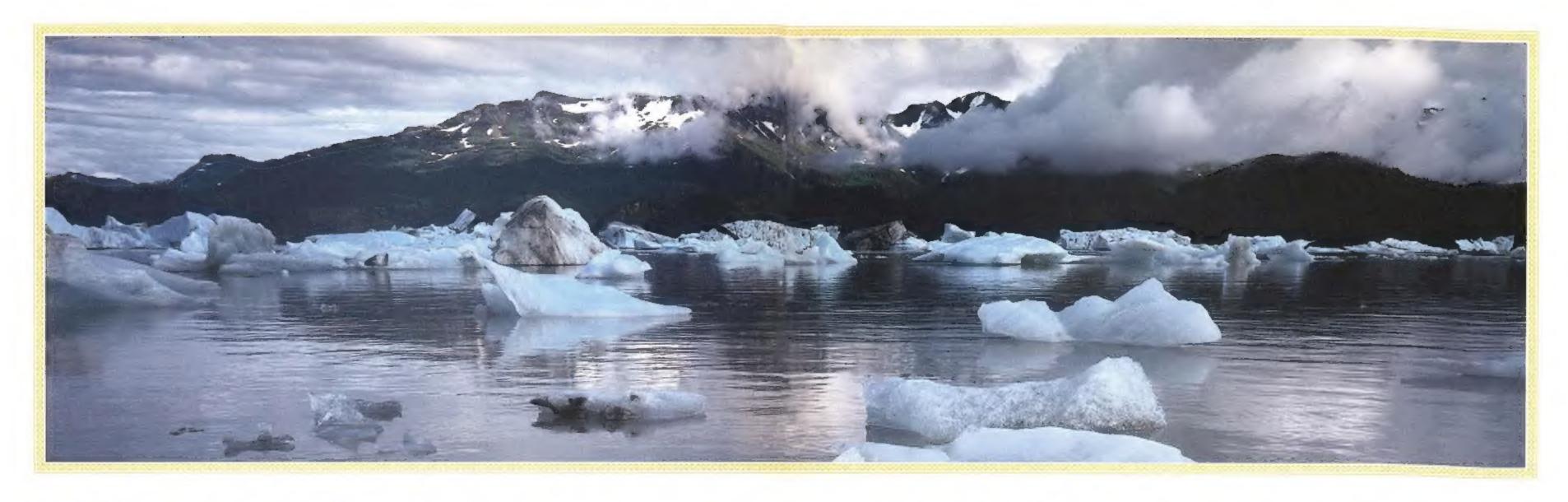
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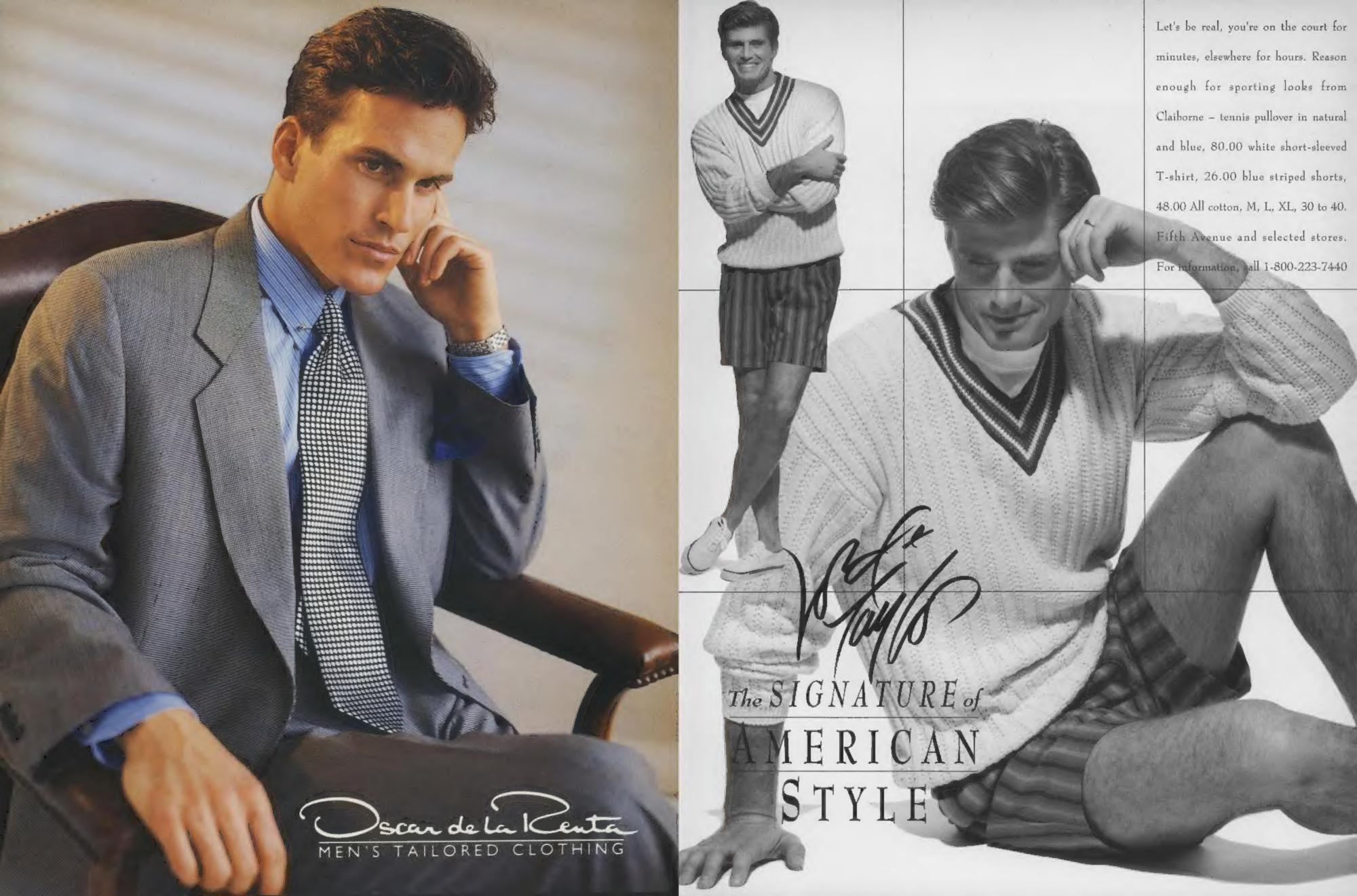
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It is something of an annual block party every spring between the families Okko and Kari. This year, the Okkos (seen below) are bringing freshroasted tippaleipa across Lake Puula. This being the 22nd such gettogether (an even year) it is agreed the Karis will supply the Finlandia.





Finlandia. Vodka From The Top Of The World.

# Eaquite Personal Shopper

ne of the most interesting facets of being a personal shopper is having the opportunity to learn about new and exciting events that are influencing the men's fashion industry. Store openings, fashion designers, style elements, and new product launches are just some of the topics that will be covered each month, as well as information on the products you see in the magazine and where to find them.

Store Opening MONDO DI MARGO, famous for sportswear and neckwear designs, is breaking new ground. Be on the lookout for Mondo Collections, the free-standing stores opening around the country this year. They've already arrived in Boca Raton, Florida, and Roosevelt Field, Long Island.

Accessories OMEGA WATCHES have accompanied men to the moon, the North Pole, and Antarctica In March, they accompanied worldclass sailor Gary Jobson and his crew on a fifteen-day sailing expedition around Cape Horn. Located at the southernmost tip of South America, Cape Horn has the same mystique as the Bermuda Triangle - that's what makes the event so exciting! Catch this televised adventure - and a chance to see Omega's new Seamaster chronograph — on ESPN-TV The cable sports channel will broadcast the one-hour program Saturday, June 5, at 6 00 PM.

Underwear. RON GHERESKIN will debut his first ever line of bikini briefs and boxer shorts with classic tattoo insignias at Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue this spring.

Footwear When Adam Derrick began designing for 10 BOOT, he filled a niche in the footwear market for quality shoes that are stylish, wearable, and very comfortable. Well-known for their wide selection of boot styles (cowboy, lace-up, jodhpur, and Chelsea — to name a few), To Boot has gained increasing acclaim for their hip and classic shoes. Now Derrick's collection is available at many of the

best men's specialty stores, including Bergdorf Goodman Men, Mark Shale in Atlanta and Chicago, and Silhouette stores in Washington, D.C.

X-Large...and then some. ROCHESTER BIG AND TALL (RBT) caters to quite a range of chents. When professional athletes like Wilhe Stargell, Clyde Drexler, and Leonard Marshall or actors like John Goodman shop for clothing, they know where to find contemporary designers that will fit their particular physiques. RBT is known around the globe for having a wide (no pun intended) selection of contemporary designers in extra large sizes. Canali, Mondo Di Marco, Hickey-Freeman, Perry Ellis, Burberrys, and Gieves &



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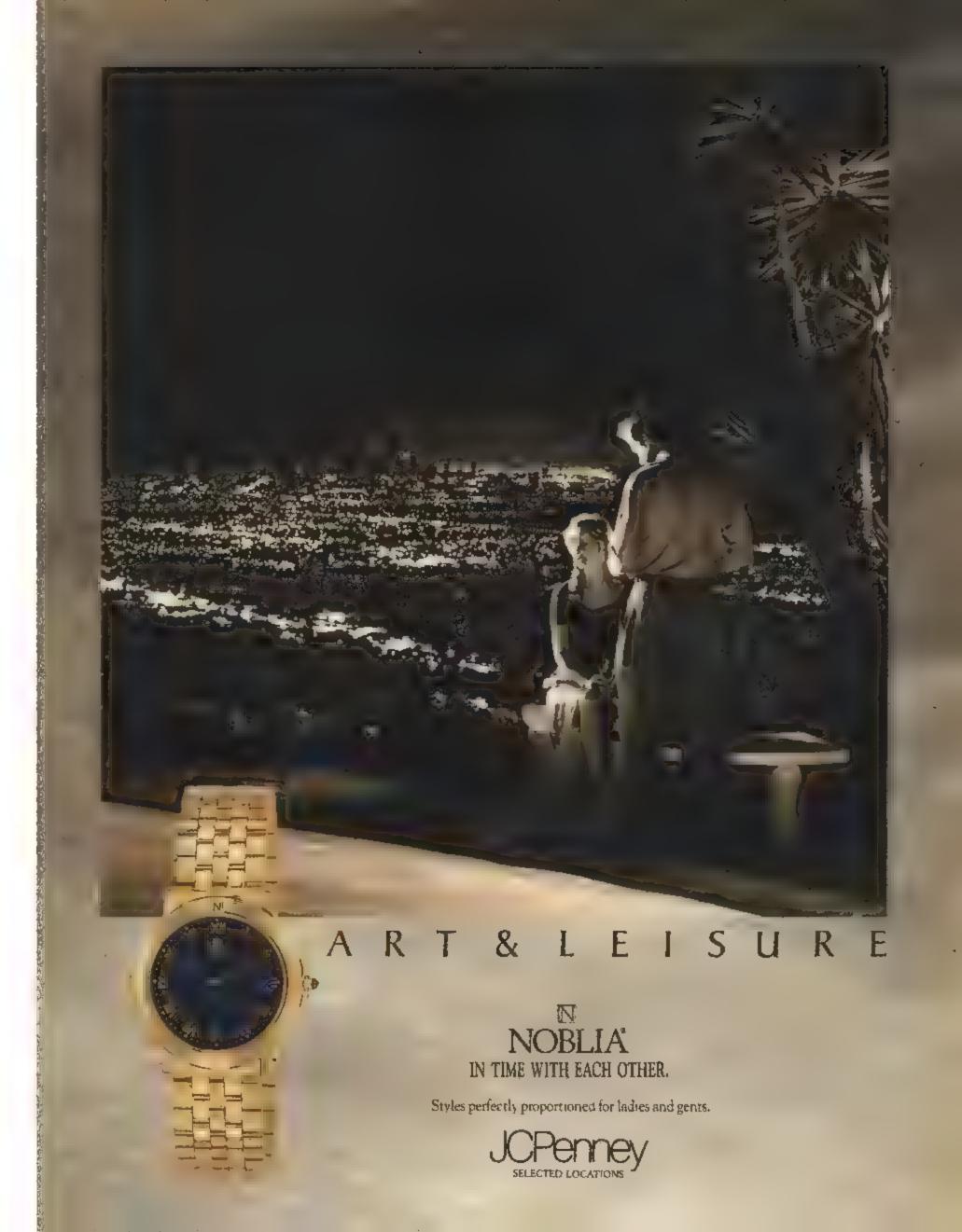
Hawkes are a few designers who have created special collections for RBT...who FYI are located in Boston, San Francisco, Beverly Hills, Dallas, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and New York City.

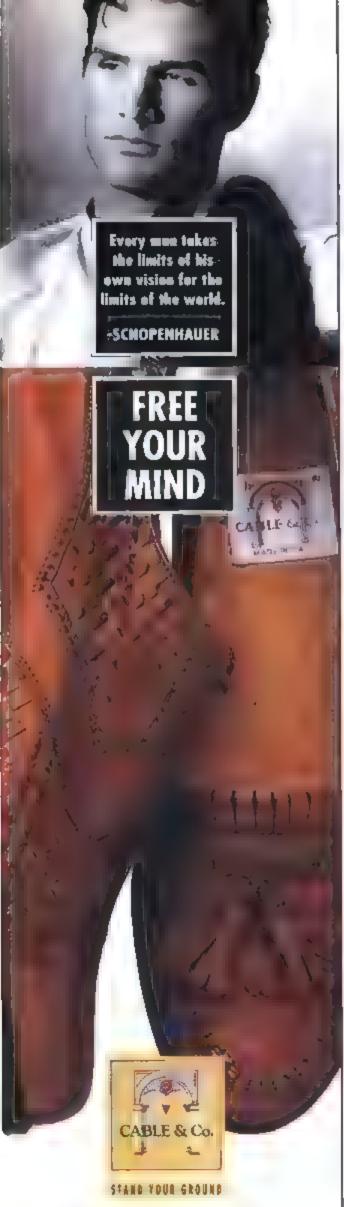
Neckwear Notes. THE KNOT SNOP, the highstyle neckwear and accessory stores, are home to just about every tie designer known to man. Interestingly enough, one designer of note is the late John Lennon. The Knot Shop features neckwear with designs from the private collection of John Lennon's pencil-line drawings. Give me a call for a Knot Shop in your area.

PAL ZILERI you say? Color! As always, Pal Zileri is showing a wide range of strong colors this spring. Sport coats are available in cobalt blue, red, mustard, and golden yellow. This season Pal Zileri will be introducing something brand new Eyewear (sunglasses and optical) for men and women will be available in optical boutiques and specialty stores around the country.

Wynton Wear Wynton Marsalis' taste in clothes is as mellow as his music Recently spotted on The Tonight Show, the jazzmeister of Lincoln Center was wearing a natty three-piece look from GIIVEN Marsalis looked one step beyond from cool and classic. Oliver's customer hotline, I.800 638.8170, can assist you with store locations and product information.

Someone got forty lashes for this one! Bigsby & Kruthers of Chicago was spelled incorrectly in the March issue. Sorry about that, Gene!





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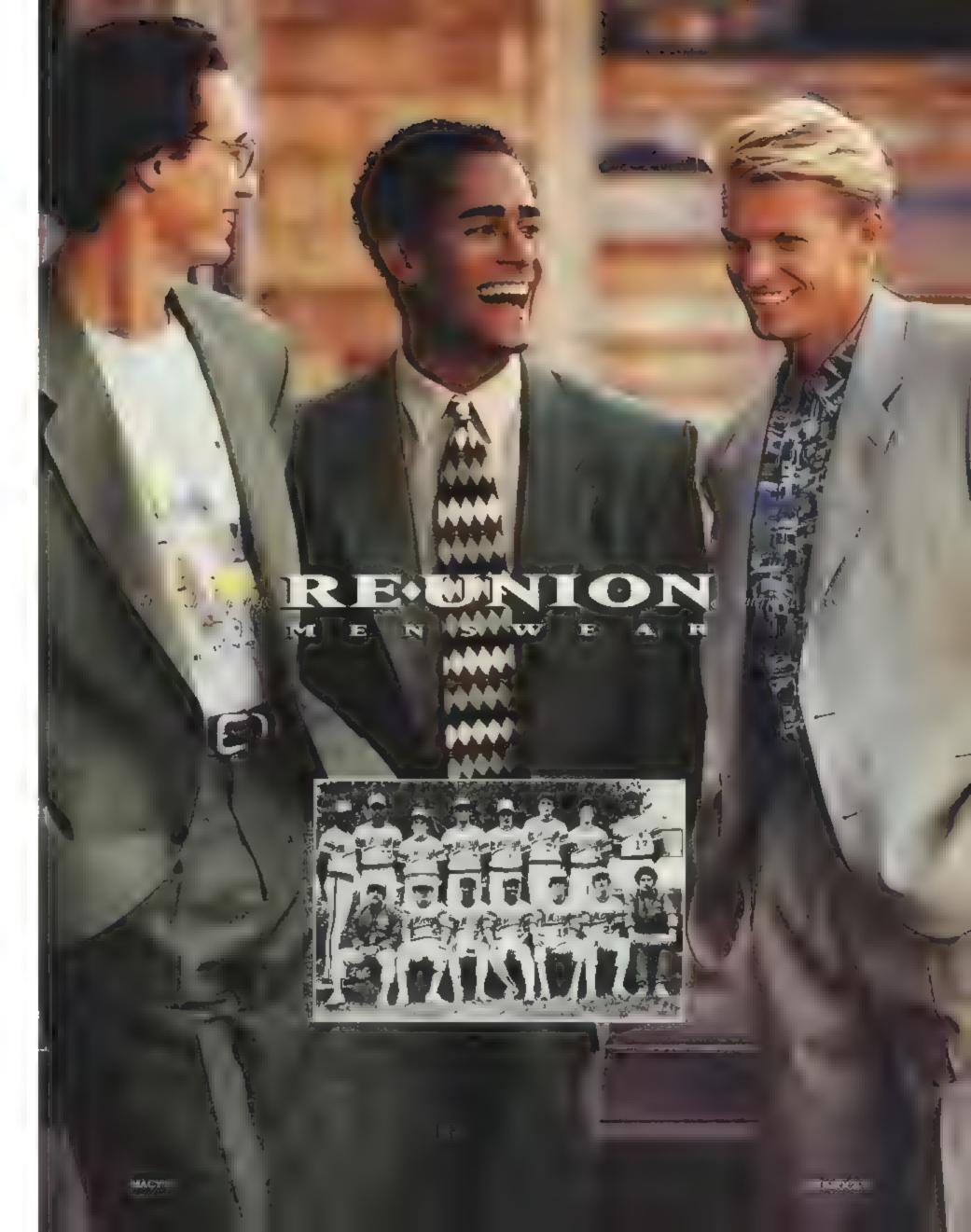
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## THE SOUND AND THE FURY

#### Salman Rushdie

OACHIEVE FROM Esquire's Dubious
Achievement Awards for 1992 is the reaffirmation of the Ayatollah Khomeini's death sentence against Salman Rushdie, a majority of the newly elected Iranian parliament declared that the fatura should last "as long as there are Muslims in the world " Although most good writers (and good readers) believe that freedom of speech is more important than observance of good table manners or avoidance of blasphemy. Philip Weiss's "The Martyr" (January) trivializes Salman Rushdie's life-threatening situation by attaching seeming importance to the mane impressions of Mr. Rushdie's ex-wife-not to mention the zealous dentist (among other dubious authorities) What especially reeks of tabloidism is the unnamed New York editor who is quoted as saying, "I can think of much better reasons for killing Salman Rushdie" The ethics of some writers (and some publications) would have enforced, in this instance, a simple rule: No name, no quote But to see Mr Weiss's gossip-ridden, cheap-shot icon-

oclasm in print is less surprising than to see it published in Esquire, a purported literary magazine. Esquire has discovered and published new and good writers, and the magazine connnues to publish good and reliable ones. It's a shame to see the magazine descend to commonplace sniping about a very good writer; worse, this happens at a time when writers the world over are beseeching their governments on Mr Rushdie's behalf-namely, to bring sanctions to bear against Iran until such a time as the death threat against him is rescinded. Yet Mr. Weiss writes, "Plainly, he gets catered to" Plainly, he should! Other noteworthy omissions from the Dubious Áchievement Awards for 1992 are Mr Weiss's nasty essay and Esquire's decision to publish it.

-JOHN IRVING Dorset, VL

CALMAN RUSHDIE deserves protectideological heirs. Their characters need Don and support not because he's much examining But I guess Mr Weiss adorable—which on the evidence he is is too prudent a journalist to take that on not-but because (crying "fire" in a crowded theater aside) freedom of speech is as necessary to a writer as the air he breathes. Philip Weiss deserves to be heard out, too, on exactly the same principle. Of course, Weiss made a lot of people cranky, especially those who like their heroes perfectly unflawed, so what? I'm not a great fan of Rushdie's work, that's neither here nor there Rushdie may be vain and mischievously arrogant, that's neither here nor there. I bear in mind that "the truth shall set you free"-although, unfortunately, it often seems to set you free only to tell the truth, which is not always popular but always necessary

-BARBARA GRIZZUTI HARRISON

THE MARTYR" is an ignoble piece of I journalism, worse, it is distracting As I tried unsuccessfully to explain to Mr Weiss, the "character issue" in the Rushdie case is not about Salman, it is about the Ayatollah Khomeini and his JULIAN BARNES London, England

THE MOST PECULIAR SENTENCE ID I your strange article on Salman Rushdie is the following: "There is talk about his odd looks, too, his hooded eyes and unruly beard and beaky nose." What an odd tone to take in an article about a writer Is this dizzy, breathless twitter supposed to represent hip contemporary insight? Hasn't it occurred to anyone that this kind of thing only encourages the people who are trying to kill Rushdie? Is Esquire trying to be more English than the English or what? Calm down and think straight

> -ROBERT STONE Baltimore, Md.

AY ONLY INTENTION when talking Mto Philip Weiss was, as president of a national PEN center, to use another opportunity to make the worldwide public attentive to the truly unhappy

fate of International PEN's honorary member, Salman Rushdie. THE WEIGHT OF WORDS BY ARNOLD ROTH During the three to four days Salman Rushdie was the guest of Danish PEN, I personally experienced the conditions under which he is forced to conduct his life. I shared them, so to speak, because the Danish police wanted me to be at his side all the time. I am sorry that remarks made on my account and not spoken by Mr Rushdie now, in principle, could limit Mr Rushdie's possibilities to move and travel, since no authorities are inspired to welcome a guest if he is known to create problems for those whose job is to protect his life. And that is the impression you get from Mr Weiss's article. The outburst, cited in the article's opening passage, was not Rushdie's but mine I would have had fits of nervousness and uncontrollable irritation, and I



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THE SOUND AND THE FURY

would have been yelling at my guards if I were he

> -NIELS BARFOED Copenhagen, Denmark

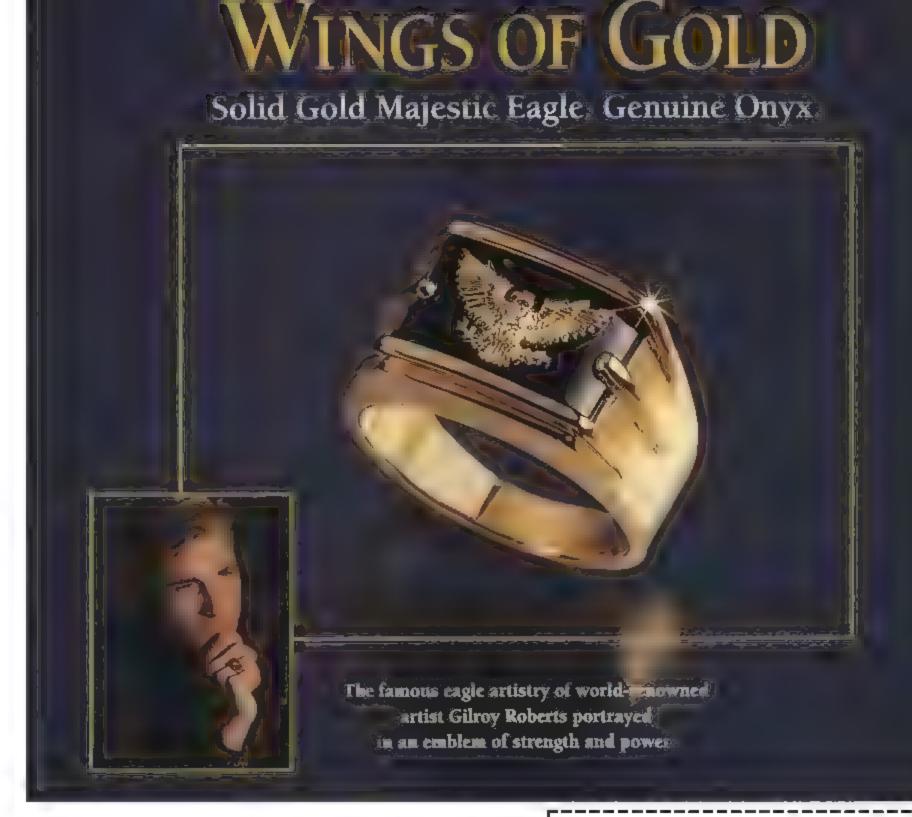
THE FATWA goes far beyond one in I dividual as Salman Rushdie is the first to recognize. It affects us all. It is a new form of remote-control state terrorism that reaches into the heart of our countries and established laws. It is a direct attack on the democratic principles of freedom of expression, and, in threatening the citizen of another country within the frontiers of his country, it is a breach of international law. To be silent in the face of it is to condone it, to be flippant in the face of it is to help perpetuate it The science of the Bush administration in the international effort to reaffirm the importance of human rights and international law was distressingly obvious. We all look to the new administration now for a response

LOUISE DENNYS President, the Canadian Centre of International PEN Toronto, Ontario

PHILIP WEISS REPLIES Rushdie's friends caricature my aims. I urge readers who are interested to look at the piece and judge for themselves how serious-minded my inquiry was As for Mr Barfoed's point, my notes of our August interview make it plain that Barfoed was describing an outpurst, not his interior monologue. In recounting the van incident, Barfoed said, "He got pissed off now and then because sometimes he wanted to take a window down and look at Denmark. He got angry That is where he has nerves." Who can possibly blame Rushdie for responding in that fashion? But Rushdie is said to fear that such reports will endanger his ability to travel, which I believe explains Barfoed's revisions.

EDITOR'S NOTE Since we ran the article. there has been some movement in the international effort to lift the death threat against Rushdie. The Clinton administration recently condemned the Iranian government "unequivocally" and termed the fatwa "a violation of Mr. Rushaie's basic human rights and therefore a violation of international law."

Letters to the editor should be mailed with your address and daytime phone number to: The Sound and the Fury, Esquire 1790 Broadway New York, NY 10019. Letters may be ed ted for length and clarity



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## BACKSTAGE WITH ESQUIRE

THEN ESQUIRE'S Washington concentrating on his other bureau reopened after a fifteen year hiatus, there was little ternship at San Francisco General Hospital "I'll be fanfare. No marching bands rolled down giving up laundry for a Pennsylvania Avenue. Maya Angelou did not whip up so much as a haiku. Rather,



the wry and stately WALTER SHAPIRO arrived at the White House pressroom, staked out a spot not far from his old Time magazine colleagues, and began his canny monthly reconnaissance of the Clinton power salon.

In his own McGovernesque way, Shapiro seemed destined for the job. In 1972, at the age of twenty-five and with a platform "slightly left of Eldridge Cleaver," he ran for Congress in Michi-

gan And lost the primary in a squeaker Defeated but undaunted, he began his career in journalism at the Washington Monthly before departing to work on Jimmy Carter's campaign, and he soon found himself in the administration, first as press secretary to the Secretary of Labor and later as a White House speech writer "Let the record show," he says now, "that no hostages were taken on Shapiro's watch "

After leaving the White House, Shapiro returned to journalism as a staff writer for The Washington Post Magazine, then as a general editor at Newsweek, and finally as a senior writer for Time, where he covered two presidential campaigns, most recently with the Clinton camp

The column's title, Our Man in the White House (page 94), refers not only to Shapiro but also to Clinton, a president who is essentially of the same generation as the average Esquire reader "Those of us who are the older baby boomers," says Shapiro, who is six months younger than Clinton, "are the last people who believe that government is a force for good "



Mark Jacobson

It's easy enough to herald the elegant aerodynamics of Michael Jordanwe even did it ourselves in November 1990-but contributing editor MARK JACOSSON thinks it's high time to make the case for Charles Barkley's thunderous street presence (" The Bad Chuck," page 90). The battle between two epic basketball aesthetics may not be joined until next month's NBA finals, but whatever happens. Jacobson insists that it's Barkley's mo-

ment "Charles has been lying in the weeds not so unobtrusively," says Esquire's new music columnist. "When Michael glides by, CB will bring him down to earth-hard."

Fans of ETHAN CANIN'S fiction will be dismayed to learn that he has temporarily put his writing career on hold Like William Carlos Williams before him. Canin is

General Hospital "Til be while, too," says the author of Emperor of the Air and Blue River Until he returns to the literary world, however, Ethan Canin

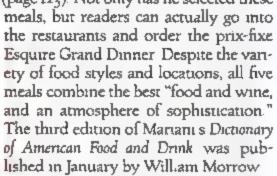


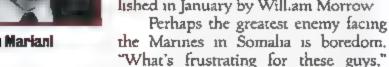
Canin's remarkable short story "The

Accountant" appears on page 101 and will be included in a book of his stories that will be published next year

JERRY STAHL, who has a brief encounter with David Bowie on page 118 ("Bowie Light"), is making his Esquire debut this month Like Bowie, Stahl knows something about living hard, having been a heroin addict for many years. "Bowie meant a lot to me," Stahl says. "Seeing him get clean was an inspiration." Stahl, who was a writer for Moonlighting and thirtysomething, is currently penning his memoirs, tentatively (and facehously) titled Bad Liver, for Warner Books.

Although food and travel correspondent JOHN MARIANT is busy researching this year's best new restaurants for "Cheers!" in our November issue, he has chosen "The Five Best Dinners in America" (page 123). Not only has he selected these



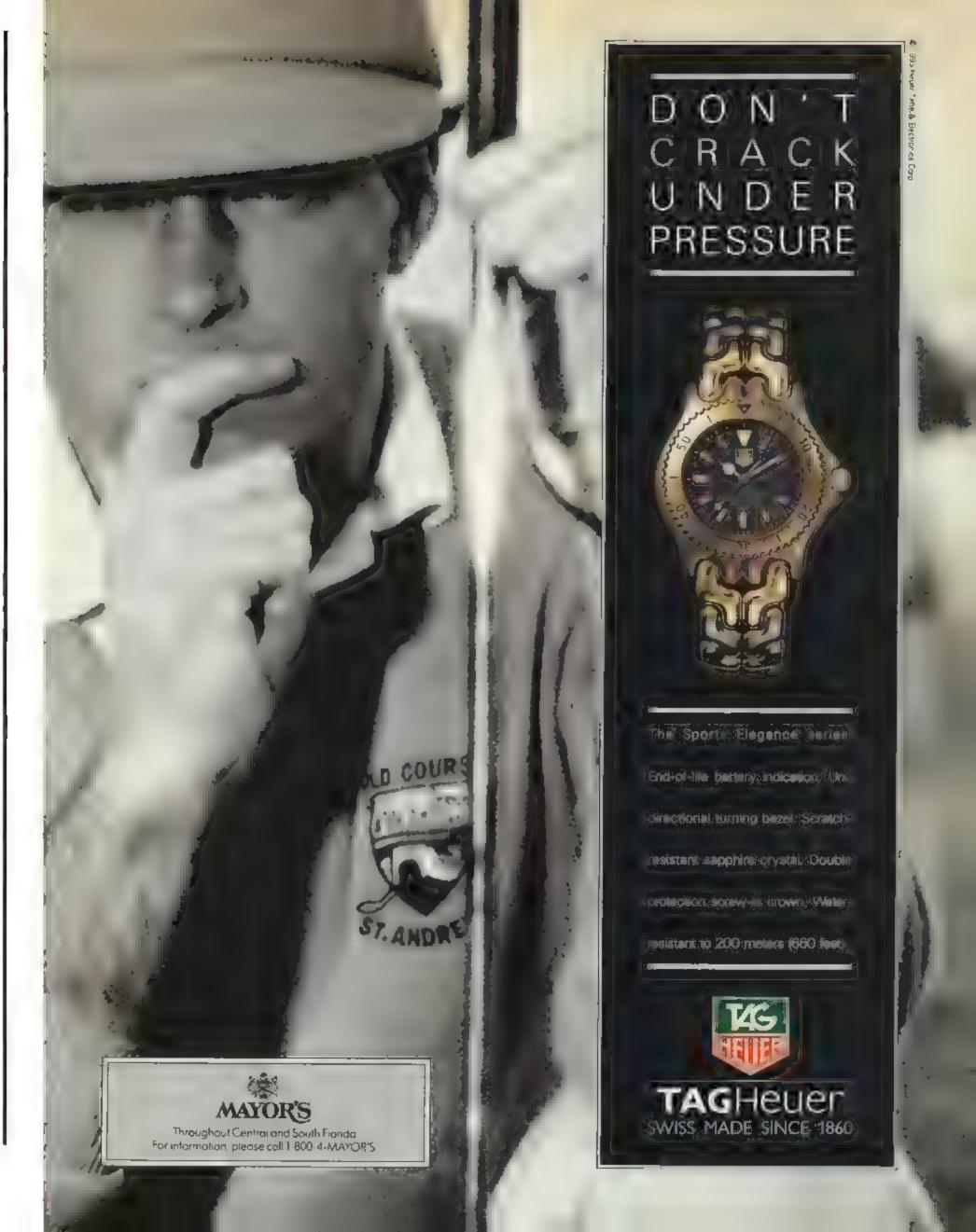


WILLIAM VOLLMANN reports in his Letter from Somalia (page 63), "is that they have not been given the power to be effective." A prolific author, Vollmann has published numerous books, including The Rambow Stories, Whores for Gloria, and The Ice-Shirt, his most recent collection of short stories, Thirteen Stories and Thirteen Epitaphs, was published last month. Butterfly Stories, a novel about prostitution in Southeast Asia (based on his article "De Sade's Last Stand," November 1992), will be out this fall

Finally, fifty years ago Esquire developed a naughty reputation for publishing Varga and Petty girls. Today America's favorite pinup is an actress who likes to put us on almost as much as she likes to take it off Demi Moore. Contributing editor MICHAEL ANGELI attended her photo shoot ("The Last Pinup," page 80) and had a lascivious adventure in Demi's monde. "I overdosed on testosterone," Angeli says wearily "After a while I didn't want to see another breast for a long time."



William Vollmann





MAY 1993

## The Reflex

Nothing political is correct —GRAFFITO

T A DINNER PARTY. the host rises, smirking, to toast his guests: "Of course I can't tell you what I really think because it would be politically incorrect, but..." Under the table, legs start to pump. What's coming next? No doubt some sexist, classist, ageist, ethnocentric, logocentric insult. Or maybe not The social history of this country is strewn with causes, but few frontal assaults on our thinking are as goofy as the creep-

ing specter of political correctness. PC, as it's referred to in mannered intellectual circles, should not be confused with restlessleg syndrome (RLS, in medical journals), although the comparison is irresistible. The former is the delineation of politics as etiquette The latter is medical terminology for an idiopathic condition that is manifested in not being able to sit still Political correctness is a reflex much like a knee jerking or a Clinton Cabinet appointment or the new campus mating ritual of turning bisexual for a year Restless-leg syndrome

is a jumpiness that was once simply attributed to nervousness It is, in fact, serious enough to cause severe insomnia, but it can be treated with sedativehypnotic agents or opiates, the side effects of which can produce the lack of clanty that characterizes political correctness. It should be noted here that some who suffer from restless-leg syndrome prefer Gatorade and bananas, which are both politically correct as far as I know That is, easy to talk about What is becoming increasingly difficult to talk about is race and sex and class and age and all the other problems that taunt us like gremlins No wonder everyone is nervous. It's tough to be who you are when political correctness is erasing your history by cartooning all context. It's fine to refer to your dog as your "animal companion," but it's

> also a good idea not to forget the lessons your ancestors learned back when they had pets To make the argument a bit more rigorously Ideas can be loathsome, but in a free society they shouldn't be illegal The cause of restless-leg syndrome is unknown. but medical research has ruled out psychological problems. The cause of political correctness, on the other hand, is sloppy thinking dosed with cowardice What do you say to a bunch of racist, sexist, classist, ageist logocentrics? Back at the dinner, the host's legs start to twitch



## FISBEST MAN

TECHNOLOGY

# Rough Rider

N THE Connecticut River Valley, not far from the old barn that houses the Cannondate Corporation, stand factories that once turned out clocks and Colt 45's Cannondale's bicycles are just as precise, just as tough, just as no nonsense Made of aeronautical aluminum the frame of the new Super V weighs less

than 4 5 pounds and rides a sus pension system worthy of Land Rover Oil and air pistons combine with eightyeight needle bearings to beat the "stiction" dreaded by mountain bikers The rider stays steady in the saddle, the company vividly claims, while "the wheels follow the subtle contours of the trail l.ke a Tomahawk cruise missile." ne



## How They Won the War

phone who claims to have infor-Democratic politics again of the national press corps and-you'll be scum."

Phone calls like that were icled by filmmakers D. A. cop, bald pro versus blow-dried

OU HAVE a choice," Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus George Stephanopoulos in The War Room, opening at Is calmly informing some- theaters this summer Penneone at the other end of the baker, the legendary creator of Don't Look Back, Monterey mation on Bill Chriton's alleged Pop, and Primary, sent a tape paternity of an illegitimate of Crisis, his look at the Kenblack child Choose wrong, he nedy administrations civil-rights says, and "you'll never work in battle to Little Rock-where, he says 'they re all Kennedy you'll be embarrassed in front freaks"-and got clearance to "go inside the locker room" of the Clinton campaign

The twin leads who emerged daily fare at Clinton cam- were James Carville and Stephpaign headquarters, as chron- anopoulos, tough cop and gentle

BUDDY FILM: How James Carville (left, with Budweiser) and George Stephanopoulos rewrote the political rule book.

idealist. It was Carville who gave the place its combative name and mood It ran on his "haiku"-SPEED BUSH read the T-KILLED shirt and, apparently, on Budweiser We see Carville tweaking the lines of a media spot to add sir-"maybe it's just a southern thing, but I like 'No, sir, don't read his hips'" a tearful Carville the night before the election, a nervous Carville on election day, extemporizing an uncanny Clinton concession speech.

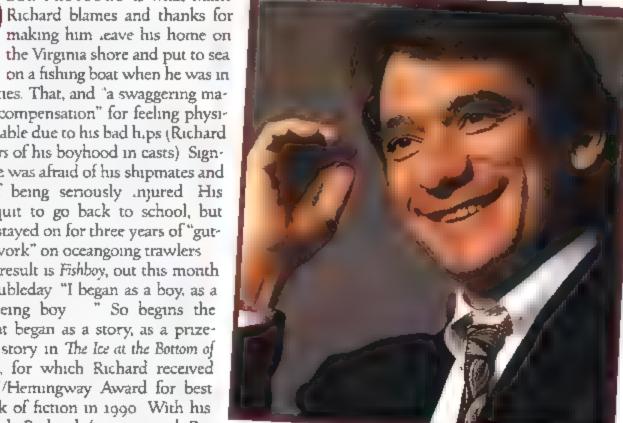
What people in the War Room, like people in their living rooms, mostly did was watch TV while preparing the famous rapidreaction releases for batch faxing But they kept their bluntest reactions, such as Carville's calling the Perot campaign "the biggest single act of masturbation in the history of the world, "unreleased until now. is

his twenties. That, and 'a swaggering macho overcompensation" for feeling physically less able due to his bad hips (Richard spent years of his boyhood in casts) Signing on, he was afraid of his shipmates and afraid of being senously injured His friends quit to go back to school, but Richard stayed on for three years of "gutbusting work" on oceangoing trawlers The result is Fishboy, out this month from Doubleday "I began as a boy, as a human-being boy " So begins the novel that began as a story, as a prize-

winning story in The Ice at the Bottom of the World, for which Richard received the PEN/Hemingway Award for best first work of fiction in 1990. With his first novel, Richard (pronounced Rishard-he is of Cajun, Creole, and French descent) has become a hard-barked mythmaker Fishboy is an eloquent fever dream, a tate told headlong in the language of incan-

the words in your dictionary," Richard says "They won't be there Their meanings are more acoustic and emotional than literal."

This story of oceangoing aberrations, of Fishboy's reincarnations from boy to murderer to victim to ghost, is grim and enlivening, moored by experience and lavishly imagined Richard left his present end, dark and funny, that sometimes home in Manhattan to write portions of the novel back in Virginia Beach. At thirtyseven, he is still drawn to water and re- sorry trawler



Weird Fish Tales

MOBY RICHARD: Author Mark Richard has a high time unth treachery on the low seas.

members that period of his life with affectation "Don't bother looking up some of tion, remembers the sea captain who

sparked the heart of the one in the novel-"a rough and tumble guy who could command a crew and fight three men at a time, but who had a soft spot, who quaked in his boots at the sight of an elementaryschool teacher "

Richard's celebration of the thing he once feared is a fresh leg-

sounds as though both Samuel Beckett and Samuel Clemens had stowed away on his -AMY HEMPEL

## The Lawsuit

A FORTY SIX YEAR-OLD Korean ammigrant stambles out of a party in Chicago, roaring drunk, his blood al cohol level officially in the "stupor" classification, at 0341. On his way home, the man feels the urge to

urmate and wanders onto the

tracks of the Chicago transit line past several signs that WATH DANGER KEEP OUT ELECTRIC CURRENT He climbs over a barrier and relieves himself onto the third rail, whereapon he is instantly electrocated. His widow sues the Chicago Transit Authority and wins a judgment of 51 5 munon. An appellate court subsequently sets the verdict aside, but the Illinois Supreme Court reinstates it. A dissenting justice angrily comments that the case illustrates "the casinolise atmo-

The casino image seems about right, when you consider the case of the finalist in the California lottery who sued when her ball fell into the winning slot for a few seconds and then popped out again, a jury awarded her the jackpot plus \$400,000 for the emotional trauma she suffered when the judges first named her the winner, then told her she'd

lost Kentucky senator Mitch McConnell's complaint that "everyone is stung everyone" may be an overstatement, but a Florida woman did sue a teenage boy for standing her daughter up on prom night. A twelve-year-old boy did sue his parents for divorce. And a Utah woman did win a settlement worth millions of dollars when she claimed the drug Halcion had made her shoot her mother

In America lawsuits are bedrock, as Chief Justice John Marshall affirmed in Marbury v. Madison "The very essence of civil liberty con-

sists in the right of every individua, to claim the protection of the laws whenever he receives an injury "But you have to admit things seem to be getting a little out of hand when a Philadelphia trolley deraits with twenty-six people on board and sixty-one people sue for injuries

In the present lugious environment, likely targets of awsuits are running for cover Social workers, school counselors, and clergymen are buying malpractice insurance against the possibility that someone might sue them for giving wrong ful advice. Writers are buying libel protection mindful of landmark cases such as Liberace's 1956 suit against the London Daily Mirror, which called him "a sugary mountain of jungling elaptrap-a deadly, winking, sniggering, snuggling, chromium plated, scent impregnated, luminous, quivering, giggling, fruit flavored mineing,

ice-covered heap of mother-love." Liberace claimed the words. suggested he was a homosexual, he was awarded \$53,000, which was a lot of money in those days. (When he died of AIDS in 1987, the Mirror ran a cheeky editional headlined ANY CHANCE OF A REFUND?) Evelyn Waugh clearly had awards

> ake Liberace's in mind when he said that whenever he was short of cash, he would peruse the newspapers, praying he'd been it beled John D Rockefeller had the opposite philosophy By rights, he could have sued everybody who ever called him a robber baron, but he never did When asked why not, he said, "See that worm? If I step on it, there will be a muss and flies will gather People will notice it. If I leave it alone, it will

> > wander off into the sand and no one will know it was there "

> > Recent talk about the "litigation explosion" was triggered by Dan Quayle's widely quoted ad dress to the American Bar Association a couple of years back Quayle put the blame squarely on the legal profession saying America had 5 percent of the world's population and 70 percent of the world's lawyers His numbers

were wildly inflated of course, but no one disputes the notion that lawyers are drawn to lawsuits like sharks to the scent of blood. We should all be as cagey in dealing with our lawyers as the financier

> Russel. Sage Sage once called his lawyer to tel, him he had become involved in a dispute. After hearing the story, the lawyer declared, "It's an tronclad case! We can't lose!"

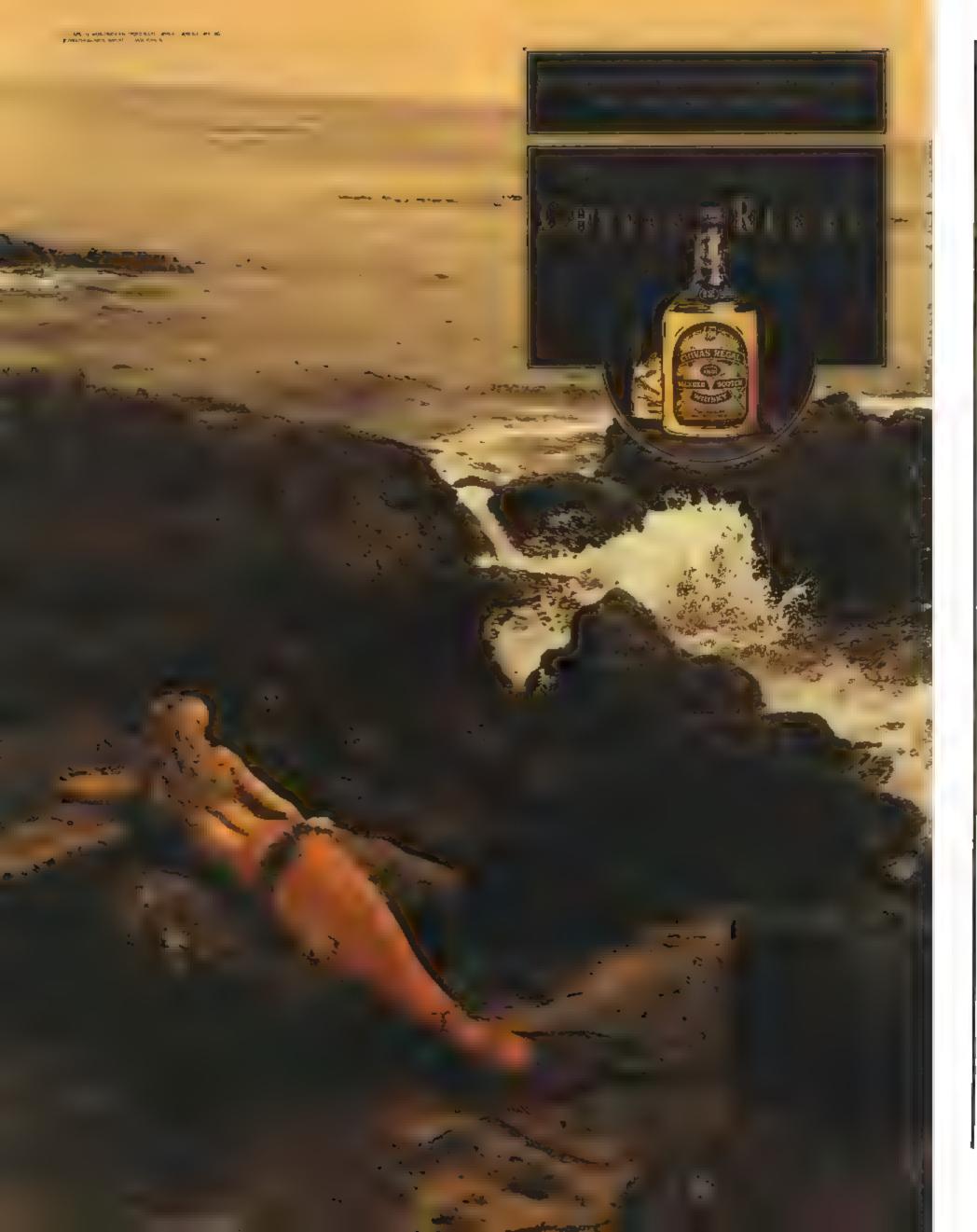
"Then we won't sue," Sage replied cool y "That was my opponent's side of the case I gave you

Legal reforms are definitely in order but Dan Quayle's remarks only served to muddle the issues Quayie decried the fact that ninety-eight milhon lawsuits were filed in 1989, but

he neglected to mention that only eighteen million of them were civil cases and that 95 percent of those involved divorces, wills, and real estate-not suits for damages, or torts which are the ones that he and George

So sue ME! John D. Rockefeller, Evelyn Waugh, Liberace, Alexander Solzhenitsvn seek justice Dan Quayle flogs the courts

CHICAGO THE ATTEN A BON ON FACTORS OF THE



MAN AT HIS BEST

Bush tended to describe as "frivolous". At the very moment Quayle was making his speech, in fact, the fastest growing types of litigation were suits brought by the federal government, which has lately been using the courts as a col-

ing the courts as a collection agency to recoup student loans and overpayments of social security and vet erans benefits

In spite of all that, it is still fair to say that ours is a more litigious society than most Alexander Solzhenitsyn chaded us for it when he spoke at a Harvard commencement a few years ago "Whenever the tissue of life is woven of legalistic relationships," he said, "this creates an atmosphere of spiritual mediocrity that paralyzes man's noblest impulses" A group of admiring tort reformers were so pleased by the antilawsuit tone of Solzhenitsyn's remarks that they asked if they could reprint his speech in an anthology Sorzhenitsyn declined say ing the text was owned by his publisher. His admirers then had a new translation prepared at their own expense, hoping to get around the copyright prob lem, and sent him the page proofs Solzhenitsyn thereapon threatened to sue His admirers responded by going to federal court and filing a suit of their own. alleging that the threats of copyright infringement violated their First Amendment rights and the fair use provisions of the copyright law A lawsuit between two parties who disdained lawsuits seemed about to take place when Solzhenitsyn finally gave in to his noblest impulses and retented #

# Sex and Death

OF BENT GENDERS AND BROKEN LIVES IN TWO NEW NOVELS



WILL SELF: He serves up rather naughty bits about our naughty bits.

Suhat lies coiled beneath even the most innocuous pair of knickers? Will Self is a young British writer in the snidely articulate Martin Amis mold this name even sounds like an Amis character's), and he has

great fun knocking gender around in Cock & Bull (Atlantic Monthly Press) a pair of novellas about sexual metamorphosis Cock, in which a London housewife named Carol sprouts one of her own and Bull, where a rugby-playing sportswriter wakes up one Sam-

saesque morning to find a vagina growing behind his left knee. The newly empowered Carol gives her husband an evening he will never forget, while poor Buil has to fend off the increasingly lascivious advances of his doctor. Will Self fully lives up to his name, willful and self-indulgent, a politically incorrect farceur who gets off on pushing his naughty con-

up Feminists, Iron Johns, and anyone without a polymorphously perverse sense of humor will probably be offended by the ever-odder couplings, but that's the way sexual satire ought to be a Swiftian kick in the who knows what

teleally sincere talk-show hosts and bad heavy-metal bands, is elevated into myth in Jeffrey Eugenides's *The Virgin Suicides* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) The sad maidens of the title are the five Lisbon sisters, who live in a magic-realist midwestern suburb. When the youngest throws herself out the window one summer night, she sets off a mysterious daisy chain of death that draws her siblings inexorably to the kitchen oven, the rope in the basement, the bottle

of pills in the medicine chest. The narrator is a collective we, a group of neigh borhood boys who try to rescue the girls from death and, later, forgetting. Eugen.des's prose weaves a sinuous spell, melding five sisters into one obscure object of desire. In most coming of age nov-

els, a thin black line separates intensity from banality, but the peculiar hormonal lyricism of *The Virgin Suicides* is shot through with a sneaky black humor that banishes sentimentality and sociology. The novel reads as if it were not so much written as distilled, all the funny-sad effluvia of growing up concentrated and purified into a slender, intoxicating book.

—IEAN-CHRISTOPHE CASTELLI

JEFFREY EUGENIDES: His first novel's a killer

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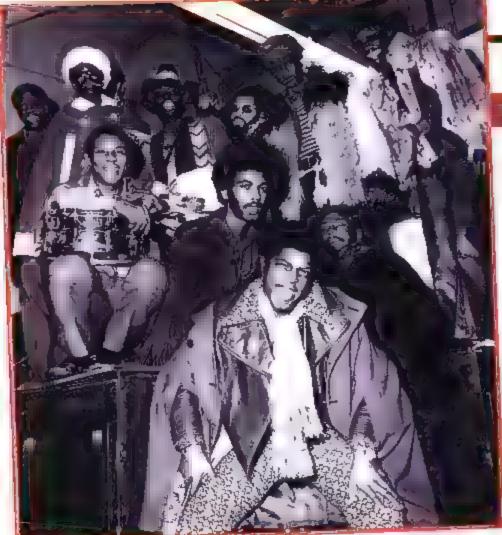
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## INTRODUCING THE AUTOMOTIVE

## ANTIDOTE FOR A SPLIT PERSONALITY.





ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE: Funkadelic and friends, circa 1970, George Clinton, below, godfather of all things funky

## Motherphunker

Music for Your Mother, slop from the barbershop Funkadelic (Westbound): Someday they'll hammerlock the hydraesque psychoalphadiscobetabioaquado.oop tendr.ls of George Clinton's Funkadelic Parliament Funk enstein oeuvre into a single box ser. But it ain't gonna be pretty, seeing as how they're gonna need Atlas and al. his van lines to bring the box and a hundred phunked up Pandoras to open it. The mere idea of so fecund a package exhausts the earhole So, funkareers, figure we dodged a maggot-brained bullet that we only got to dea, with this here hour-and-a-half messaround a double CD compliation of Funkadelic 45s from way back yonder in 1969-1976

Which is okay with me, since I've got a special affection for nascent P-Funk-post the "(I Wanna) Test fy" Plain field, New Jersey, doo-wop

(where writer singer Svengal. Clinton hairdresser by trade, marcelled the process with Funkadelic sides 'manic fingers") and pre continue to asthe hirsute extensions of the much-Mylared Mothership Because back then it was like looking over J Robert Oppenheimer's shoulder in Los Alamos, witnessing the alchemic advent of the Bomb Testifying We was at the Apollo in 1970, wild side walking white boys thinking how stick it was to see the Unifies, the Capitols, the Man hattans, and the rest of that smooth sou, stuff in its natural environs, and wham, there were these impeccably cool back people running around appropriately in bed sheets and diapers and less and they were playing notes.) There some kind of rock in roll It are any numwas more outside than Sly, her of bent raunchier than Hendrix, a classics here, big bottomed, acidic R&B the Tempta

AI H I S

conjured to the coat-pull ing smack of something new The Bomb

By now, of course, many densepak treatises have been written about P Funk's cross cult, postmod onslaught of acute mane comic book ("Think It's not illegal yet<sup>m</sup>) sci-fi sign and semenology, how the genius of Clinton, bass player Bootsy Collins keyboardist Bernie Worrell, and the rest of the desperately underappreciated funk fiends linch pinned a billion Escher ngged bridges back to the Sun Ra and even Elangton ensembles (not to mention Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts) and forward to

Prince plus every rapper who

ever gripped a m.ke too tight

Besides, the phunk stil. phunks That's the phenomenon of Music for Your Mother Less widely disseminated than Parliament's latter day profit motive phantasma, these sault the mind set with the unremitting gnaw of innovation (As for how Clinton managed to mar ket two bands with the same personnel, see under chutzpah Don Kingish vanety, and several acrimonious lawsuits-coprousry described in the arcane liner

tions with airplane engine "I'l. Bet You, the bizarro gospel "Open Our Eyes" the meta morality play 'Cosmic Slop," the colossally riffed Standing on the Verge of Getting It On " Audacious in every respect, certain sentiments stand out Fabulously coy, "Jimmy's Got a Little Bit of Bitch in Him" ("a aittle bit of she in he the bitch in him outweighs the Jim but why frown? Even the sun goes down") reveals a decid edly more playful could say enlightened, attitude toward sexual ambiguity than is likely to be found in the recent works of such P Funk pe Levers as Public Enemy But now, twenty years later, what amazes is how good these records are, how mastermand

atomic dog in the studio. breaking off one crisp, uncluttered mix after another when we were supposed to think the funk was unfettered anarchy

Canton turns out to be a sly

In closing, a funkster would be remiss not to report the recent death of Eddie Hazel the grand Delic gultarist who, of course, never got his true due (or money) According to news reports from P-Funk's ancestral home in Plainfield, neither his age nor cause of death could be venfied At the funeral, as visitors filed past his coffin strains of Haze,'s signature song, "Maggot Brain," filled the church A true Funk moment, no doubt 14



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M A N A T H I S B E S T
STYLE

# In the Spirit of the Dragon

STEPHEN MAN

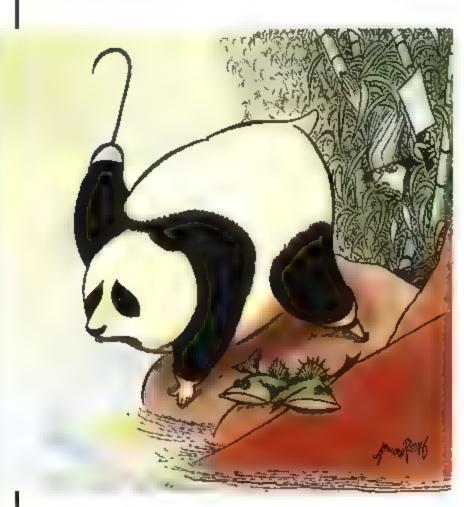
IF IT LOOKS LIKE Jason Scott Lee has something heavy on his mind, there's a good reason for it He recently spent a good eleven months of his life mastering the grueling art of jeet kune do, diplomatically translated as "way of the intercepting fist "Why? you ask, guardedly. To get into the head of Bruce Lee Young Lee-no relation to the mythic Bruce-takes on the persona of the kung fu demigod this month in Dragon, the first-ever Bruce Lee bio-pic Lee, who grew up in Hawaii and recently left L A to get back to his roots, confesses to a certain fixation on the master in his youth ("I wore T-shirts, and I got posters and made nunchakus . "), which helped him get into what he benignly refers to as "the mechanics of how to get an explosive end reaction in your action " Ka-pow. Offscreen, Lee maintains a mellow composure, preferring to talk about the cosmos and Bruce Lee's melding of Eastern and Western philosophies rather than cracking heads "It's really all about the spirit,

FIGHTING SPIRIT: The warm-weather metaphysical look—Jason Scott Lee in an apenweave cotton sweater (\$550) from Calin Klein.

a big life on the big screen A good sign: When he says that, he smiles

MAY 1994 BSQ'I'ILE

## With Six You Get Bear Paw



say they like their meat rare, they don't mean undercooked. Though Western imports like XO Cognac and Mercedes-Benzes are all the rage in China's go-go capitalist enclave, environmental sensitivity has not yet made the crossoverespecially in the kitchen In this part of the world, wildlife preservation is done in pickle jars

The Chinese taste for exone cuisine dates back to the 1600s, when the seminomadic Manchu from the North overran the Middle Kingdom With their newfound wealth the conquerors set out on a culmary tradi tion so over the

Perfect back flip,

with a twist.

Tanqueray

HEN HONG Kongers top it would make Nero blush, combining their own feasts with those of the native Han people to create enormous banquets which they called, in recognition of the merger, Man-Han

> As the years passed, the scope of delicacies grew to embrace such rannes as carp's tongue, gonlla's hps. and mock leopard's placenta By the time the Manchu Dynasty ended in 1911, things were pretty well out of

hand Henry Pu Yi. Bertolucci's Last Emperor wrote in his autobiography that he had more than twenty-five dishes at every meal, and his grandmother the empress dowager more than a hundred

Then came Mao and dark times for the gorilla-lip lifestyle Fortunately for tradition, when China's capital ists fled south, so did the Man-Han banquet

The people of Hong Kong, it is said, enjoy eating "anything with its back to the heavens "They are, more im portant, rich and fond of conspicuous displays of wealth Particularly prized are foods like bear's paw and white crane Both are on the menu at Maxim's Palace, the lavish flagship of Hong Kong's largest restaurant chain, where they are served as simmered sliced bear's paw with black mushroom and Yunnan ham, and doublebound white crane with ginseng and fish maw

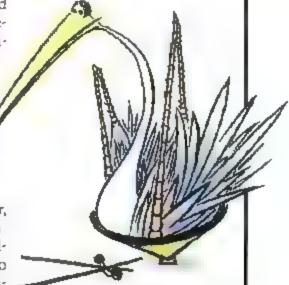
Bear's paw, like any true delicacy, must be ordered well in advance Just finding a paw takes two or three weeks Then at must be soaked at least three days to loosen the thick fur,

marinated for one day, sim mered for another, and finally simmered for one or two hours with the other ingredients Naturally it's served with a flourish First, a raw paw, severed at the wrist and cut in two to expose the pale flesh, is presented to the guest of honor Then the uncooked paw is removed and cooked portions are carried in by waiters in imperial dress. At the end of the banquet, the diners receive a certificate listing what they ate

For the exotic gourmet, indigestion is spelled CITES The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, signed by 117 coun-lucky ones

tries, prohibits or restricts trade in thousands of plants and animals, including all species of bear, all species of crane, and many other rare, tasty creatures. Nonetheless, last year, working with a budget of \$25,000 for a table of twelve, Perer Lau, chief arranger of banquets for Maxim's, came through with camel's hump, African leopard, and elephant trunk "It's harder and harder to get." he says of the last, "now that elephants are so protected " That one dish added \$1,500 to the cost of the meal

Since the trade is techni cally illegal, it's generally little



spoken of, but business is healthy, and occasionally it stumbles into public attention Recently a highly endan gered clouded leopard was discovered running around the streets of the Mongkox district, one of the densest urban areas in the world What was it doing there? An Agri culture and Fisheries officer sent to capture the beast said he couldn't believe the worst "Very few people," he said, "eat leopards in Hong Kong"

No, indeed Just the JEFF WISE

ARNOLD ROTH



ED MOLEY they call He made him around Cody, sure every Wyoming Furniture thing that maker Thomas Molesworth came out lives on in spirit in a circle of Shoshone of furniture makers clustered was rock solaround the town Buffalo id, but he Bul founded in 1805. Once, was no au-Molesworth would have teur "Tom would been lumped in with the probably kick and scream makers of lariat edged china and all that other cowboy kitsch But a show at the Reper, who put together the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Molesworth show He never appreciative books such as signed anything, and only a Cowboy High Style (G.pbs Smith), and rising prices for Molesworth living room set his work have shown him to worth \$25,000 or a \$15,000 be as say making furnature as couch from numerous imitahe was playing poker with tions. These days, Molesthe poys around his Shoshone Furniture factory

Working with wood burl at does most often at Fighting and antlers, leather secured Bear Antiques in Jackson with brass tacks, and blanket like fabric from Chimayo, near

But Moley's greatest lega-Santa he. Moiesworth turned by is a circle of disciples the West into the Western around Cody, fellows like Ken Siggins, Jimmy Covert, and I Mike Patrick who turn out Molesworth style easy chairs as sturdy as a Studebaker chuck wagon. lodgepole dressers as four square as ranch houses and .ron chandeliers whose st. houetted broncobusters loom larger than life

if he knew he was being

made high art" says Wally

sharp eye can pick out a

worth's own furniture rarely

Hole, it gets snapped up fast

comes on the market. When

Molesworth did his stuff for a West already legend Like Buffalo Bil. he saw

that the show man had replaced is the aesthetic of the postcard jack-

dale-a shared joke for the dude who wants to be shown not only the West but a wild West show

Molesworth decorated dude ranches and grand hote s such as the Stockmen's in Elko and the Plains in Cheyenne His clients included publishing tycoon Moses Annenberg, Dwight Eisen-

hower, and Coca-Cola mag Ranch and riding a mule nate Robert Woodruff, who bought Buffalo Bill's old TE ranch. In the 1930s he was celebrated as far away from Cody as the front window of Abercrombie & Fitch But by the 1960s, even the folks in Cody had exiled his stuff to the garage. He died little the cattleman His appreciated in 1977 Among the few who remained loyal was Siggins, who repaired alope, the tall tale lots of Molesworth furni-

NEW WEST: Mike Patricks web-sided chair and chandelier. a Jimmy Covert table

in an old cabin near Siggins's Triangle Z named Will.e to work

Today, with work in the Molesworth spirit in high demand, life is more compl. cated Siggins recently did a whole ranch for Tom Brokaw, and Covert has gone covert "Frank.y," he says. "I'm kind of trying to drop out of sight" Siggins and Covert head for the hills to hunt, while decorators from L A hunt for them So when tradition turned ture, then began to make his you track down Covert or into tallboy It's own Covert worked with Siggins or Mike Patrick, take buffato Chippen Siggins for five years, living a number and be patient in





in the saddle.

REAL DUDE: A

Molesworth room-

scape: Old Moley

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Buckle up, America!

THE SEASONED COOK

wich I ever had should have been cooked by an amateur breaking all the rules. He coated the crabs with too much flour, seasoned them with some sort of MSG-hamburger-spice mix, and fried them in an overcrowded skillet awash in Crisco, the scariest small red pepper unof all fats. But when ne

crab between two marshmallowy slices of bread, it was phenomena. The meat was sweet and succulent, the little legs brittle and crunchy

The trick, of course, is a little minced garhe that he started with Chesa peake Bay crabs that had just shed their hard shells We were on a boat heading back to Crisheld, Maryland, after a frustrating May morning when too few females had been lured into traps baited with jimmy crabs, and one of the crew insisted we sample the meager catch. He fished up fat crabs too soft to make it to market, heated the mny gas burner in the wheelhouse. and demonstrated how little I knew about frying.

Since I'll never get crabs over my squeamishthat fresh again, I've come up with a way to compensate What I consider the quintes sentia. urban soft-shell sandwich is a rich layering of crunchy crab, buttery avoca-

HE BEST soft do, peppery arugula, shell crab sand and mellow roasted pepper mayonnaise Soft bread is best to the worst It was tuck it all into, although I would track down proche before resorting to Wonder

The crab is the centerpiece, but you start with the accoutrements Roast a der the broiler or s.apped one crisp over a flame until it's evenly charred Let it cool, then slip off the skin and scrape out the seeds Put

> and a half-cup of Hellmann's crab's face, snip off the flap of Puree until smooth, then blend in a little Tabasco, or chopped basil if you have it Make sure you have a handful of arugula washed and ready along with a ripe avocado and half a tomato, thin ly sheed Finally, next to the stove set two dishes, one filled with buttermilk, the other with a combination of flour and commeal plus a teaspoon of Old Bay Seasoning

You can buy soft-sheds aready cleaned, but I got ness on that Chesa peake boat and now have no problem using a sharp knife to cut off a



blender and add with roasted-red pepper mayonnaise Don't even try it out of season

its apron, and scrape out its dead man's-fingers (aka gills) Rinse it, then dry well

Heat three tablespoons of butter with a cup of extravirgin olive oil in a small, heavy skiller over a medium flame. When the oil is s.z- trendy now they're zling, dip the crab in the but termilk, then dredge it in the flour mixture and shake off the excess Lay it in the pan, top-side down Fry it for about three minutes, then flip the crab over and continue

cooking until it's very errsp and nut-brown, maybe three minutes longer

> While the crab cooks, spread soft sliced bread lavish-

ly with the pepper mayonnaise Top one slice with arugula, then a few shees of avocado and tomato. Lay the hot crab on top, add a little more avocado and tomato, and slap the other slice over it

Soft-shells are so on menus even in January, but the only way to have them will always be freshly caught My last lesson on the boat that spring morning came when I complained to the captain that a sandwich in a Crisfield restaurant had been made with last year's crab "They should tell you it's frozen." I whined And he just said, "You should ask."

-REGINA SCHRAMBLING





#### House Hunting

## A Screen Porch in Carolina



GOING SOUTH: Attention, Yankees—you can still find an affordable home with history in the enlightened center of the Carolinas.

THE PLACE: Chapel Hill, North Caroli- who can't afford the village Hillsborna, and environs. A gentle, liberal enclave of eccentrics, misfits, and scholars, Chapel Hill claims more Ph.D.'s per capita than any other area in the US It's a place where two-hundred-year-old trees grow in the middle of town and local ladies still sell fresh-cut flowers along the sidewalk in the spring.

THE VILLAGE: Chapel Hill was founded around the students who came to a fledgling University of North Carolina in the late eighteenth century Though "the village" is only twenty minutes from an international airport, prices are still (by urban standards) provincial, the average price for a house is \$160K, though you can find a "townhome" for \$80K and four bedrooms for upwards of \$200K Start at \$200K if you want historical clapboard.

THE BOROUGHS: Carrboro, dubbed "the Paris of the Piedmont" by its more cosmopolitan neighbors in Chapel Hill, is the site of a lot of recent development If you're lucky, you'll find an old millhouse to renovate. Think working class, students, and faculty

ough, twenty minutes northwest, is smaller, quieter, and in vogue with renrees and urban refugees.

CULTURAL INDEX: There's the National Humanities Center for the literary crowd, the Spivey's Corner Hog Calling Festival for those with good lungs, the Cat's Cradle bar, home of the next big grunge wave is somewhere in be-Chapel Hill on their

new album

THE TRIANGLE: By the 1950s North Carolina's main export was homegrown graduates seeking their fortunes abroad. To plug the brain drain, the Research Triangle Park, a white-collar preserve of sorts, was established among Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill The park has since athigh-tech and biotech companies, and provides jobs for tens of thousands. A short commute costs more. Homes close to businesses in the Triangle begin around \$150K and can go upwards of seven figures. Styles range from Revolution era to modern

THE OUTLOOK: Nothing but blue sky The Research Triangle nurtures industries that will burgeon in the coming tween Critical hipness limus. Sonic century, while the continued growth of Youth's endearingly corrosive ode to the University of North Carolina (up

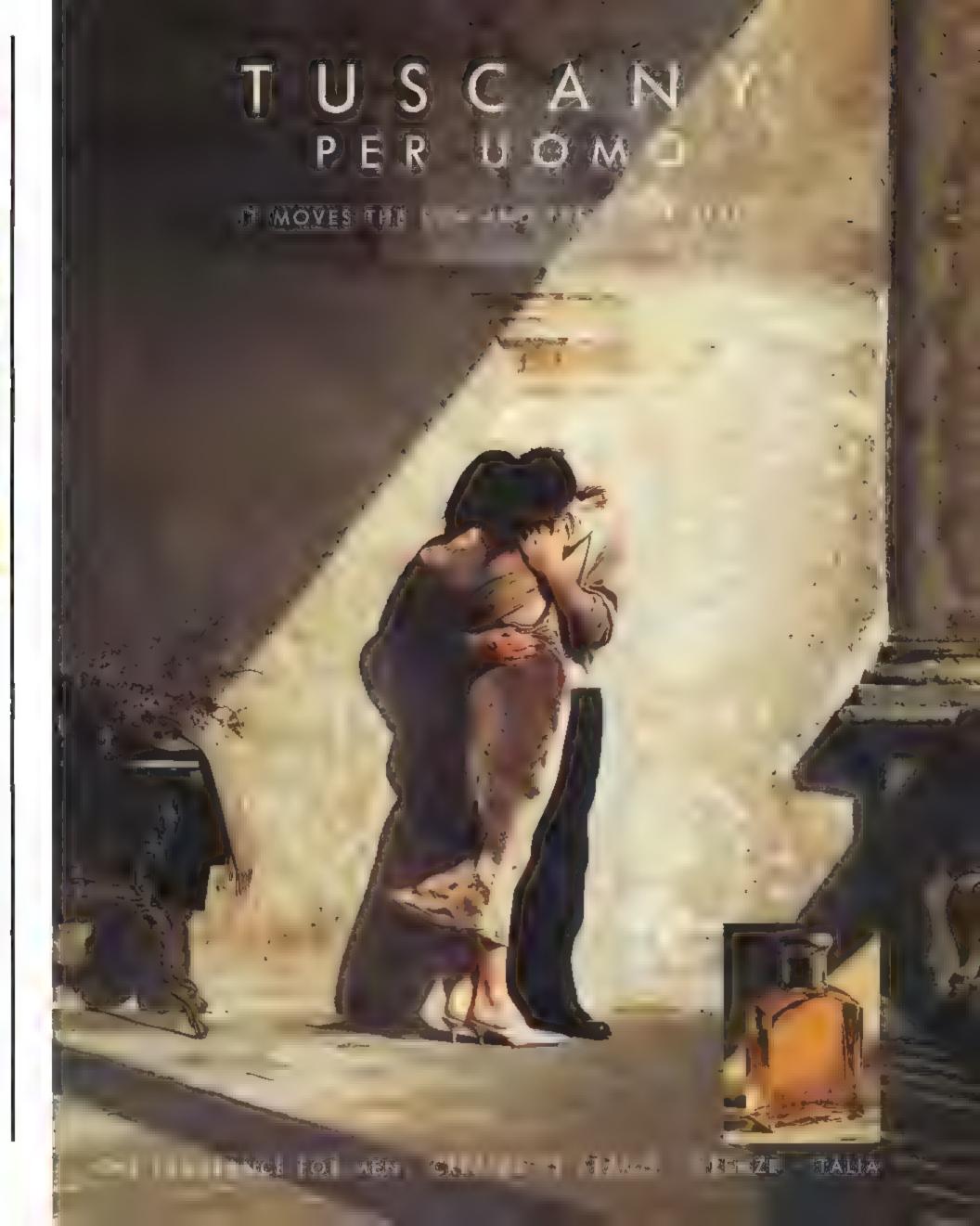
400 percent in sponsored funding in the past decade) should reaffirm the area's scholarly, liberal bent for some time-perhaps to the chagrin of conservatives Legend has it that Senator Jesse Helms, when scouting a site for the state zoo, proffered the village a left-handed compliment "Just fence in Chapel Hill," he said, "and there you go."

-ERIC PERRET

SUSAN STILLMAN

#### THE LISTING The "Yaggy house" in the Chapel

Hill historic district. Built in 1917 by a former UNC president: 3,900 square feet on a half-scre lot with four bedrooms and ten-foot ceilings. Big porch (and big pantry-100 square feet). Five minutes from campus Asking: \$350,000. Source: tracted all manner of The Prudential Carolinas Realty.



## Setting the Record Straight



can history has been more reviled, feared, and, in some quarters, revered as John Edgar Hoover, who for forty-eight years ran the FBI as a personal fieldom until his death in 1972. Nor was anyone the subject of more whispers. Now a book has been published that purports to give us all sorts of earthshaking revelations about him, trumpeted complete with a full page ad in The New York Times, musting

read endorsements from authors Norman Mailer and Gore Vi-

dal, and major excerpts in Vanity Fair and the esteemed London newspaper. The Independent on Sunday

The biggest of these revelationsand the one that especially caught my eye-was that, lo!, the many years that Hoover was running the bureau, he never went after the mob because the mob had photographs of Hoover and his presumed lover, Clyde Tolson, the FBI's associate director, going down on each other or otherwise engaged in sex acts. Since the FBI's record under Hoover in combating Cosa Nostra and other facets of the organized underworld was, to put it gently, abysmal, I thought, Oh, wou, at last the final solution! Alas, it turns out to be all garbage without even a presentable trash can to contain it.

Let me state where I'm coming from I've been a Hoover foe from the first. During my days as an investigative writer, as I learned from the scores of pages I obtained from the bureau through the Freedom of Information Act, I myself was the subject of numerous FBI investigations while working on stones that Hoover found irksome. Indeed, one of my most prized possessions is from an investigation Hoover launched after he learned I was pursuing a piece on the lawyer-cum-fixer (and closet homosexual) Roy Cohn that

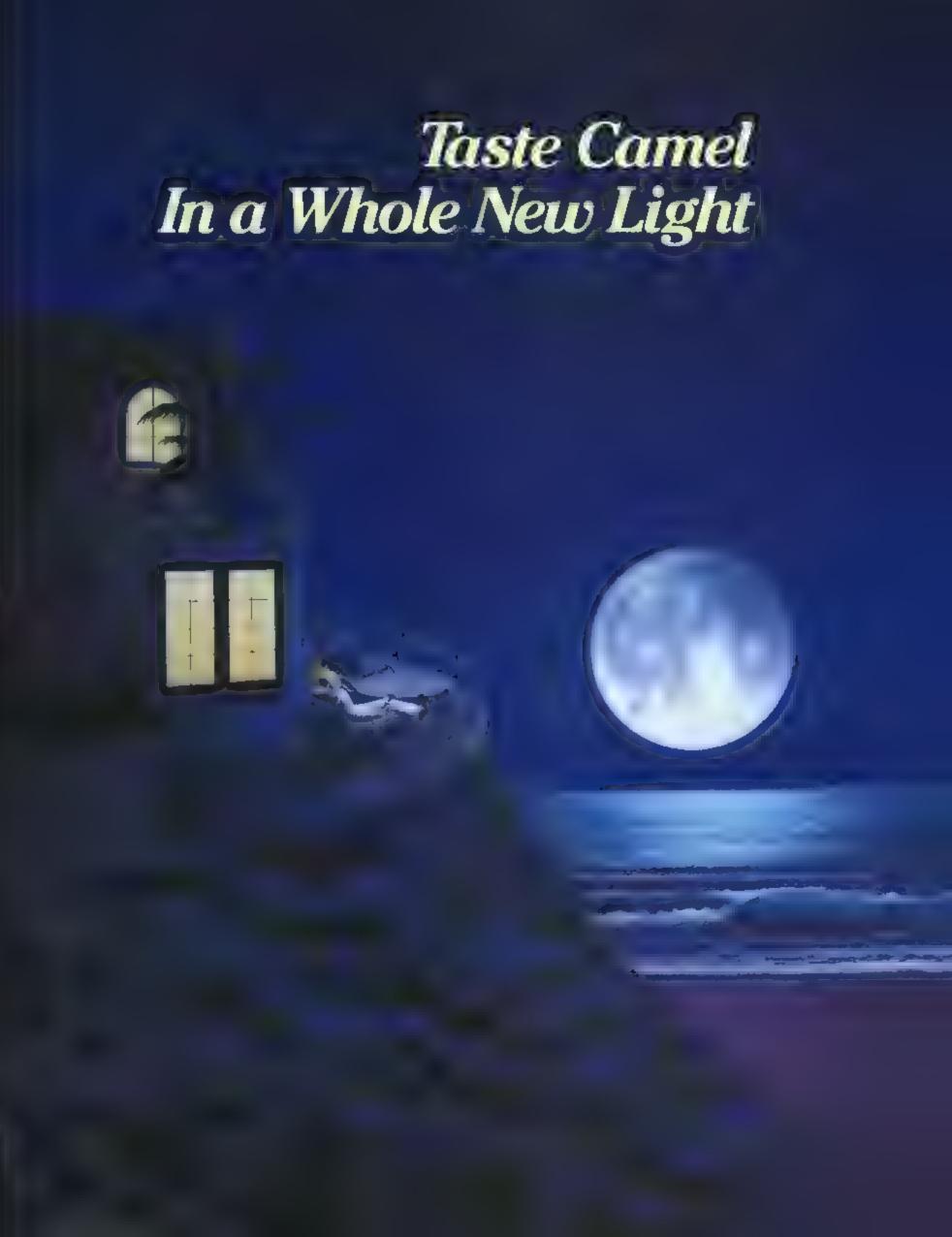
showed that Cohn could get Hoover to severely punish agents who were looking into some of Cohn's activities. On one page, in Hoover's handwriting and signed H, is the notation "What do we know of Peter Maas?"—which was more than enough to send a squadron of agents fanning out to unearth something scurrilous about me. (The worst they could find, I'm happy to report, was that I was a "personal friend" of another object of Hoover's disdain, then attorney general Bobby Kennedy.)

So I was prepared to read and beheve almost anything about a fatuous, personally corrupt, evil ass who for decades appeared to have presidents, senators, and congressmen, among others, quaking at the thought of information about them in his fabled secret files. This, of course, is the leverage of the book, which is titled Official and Confidential. The Secret Life of J. Edgar Hooser. And, of course, that's precisely what is so wrong with it.

The author Anthony Summers, a British journalist, is identified on the book jacket as a former BBC correspondent.



G-MAN'S BEST FRIEND: J Edgar Hoover shares a quiet moment, in 1954, with a boxer Could this be one of the photos he feared the mob had in its possession?







A source he cites for the Hoover/Tolson flagrante delicto pictures is my friend John Westz, the clothes designer, who was in the OSS, our spy service in World War II Westz is quoted as having been at a private dinner in Washington in the 1950s when the subject of Hoover came up, whereupon his unnamed host

I got to Jimmy

the photos

His answer:

Blue Eyes about

allegedly had of

"Are you nuts?"

graph of two men engaged in homosexual activity It's Hoover and Tolson, the host said,

Westz told me that Summers had indeed called him about Hoover There'd been a Meyer Lansky time when the FBI and the new CIA, which evolved out of the OSS, were in a fierce turf battle, "We had a brief phone conversation," Weitz said. "The photograph, as I recall, was very, very blurry. It

seemed to show two men humping on a tographs. Hadn't Summers inquired? beach Perhaps it was Hoover, perhaps not. I didn't give it much import '

Of more import, Westz also told me that his host was James Angleton, the CIA's counterintelligence chief, whose wacky paranoia in his search for Soviet moles and other miscreants eventually led him to be forced out of the agency You'd think that under the circumstances Angleton would have cried, "Hey, guys, wait a minute! Look what I have here."

Weitz, however, is merely ushered onstage to support the book's bombshell news-that since the mid-1930s, the mob had these pictures of Hoover and Tolson Specifically, Summers informs us, the photographs-the ultimate "proof" that Hoover was homosexual-were in the hands of the famous gangster Meyer Lansky, whose Machiavellian talents were said to have made him one of the chief architects of the modern organized underworld in America. You may remember him as the Lee Strasberg character in The Godfather, Part II, in which he whispers to Al Pacino's Michael Corleone in a memorable scene in Havana, "We're bigger than U S. Steel." In the Summers book, we are led to believe that Lansky's blackmail was so successful that Hoover not only kept the FBI from going after Cosa Nostra and its allies, but did everything possible to prevent anyone else from doing so Funny, isn't it, that the U.S. Steel line came from an FBI bug on Lansky that was immediately leaked by the bureau to the press?

Still, Summers writes without equivocation, "There is no knowing, today, whether the OSS obtained sex photographs of Edgar from Lansky, or vice verdisappeared and returned with a photo- sa, or whether the mobster obtained them

on his own initiative "

Another friend of mine, William Hundley, is quoted a number of times in the book. Hundley was chief of the organized crime section in the Kennedy Justice Department. Arguably, during his prosecuto-J. Edgar Hoover. rial days, he was unrivated in his knowledge about the nation's crime syndicates But there's no quote from him about the pho-

> When I called Hundley, he told me that, indeed, he had been asked And how did he respond? "I told him," Hundley said, "that it was baloney I guess he didn't use it because it didn't fit with what he wanted to hear '

> One of the main pillars to support the blackmail charge is a quote Summers attributes to the editor and columnist Pete Hamill It's presented as if Hamill had been personally interviewed, with lines like "Hamili recalled " But, it turns out, Hamill was never interviewed Pete told me the quote must have come from a column he'd written right after Hoover's death In it, two Las Vegas gambling figures tell him that Lansky had pictures of Hoover and Tolson in some gay situation "It was strictly anecdotal stuff and written in that context." Hamill said. "You know how mob guys gossip like old women. It was the sheerest hearsay. The fact is that I don't even know if Hoover was gay."

> Two or three other alleged Lansky associates were also quoted—at what hand, first, second, or third, is hard to say-about the photographic "proof" on Hoover But one man, universally recognized as the person closest to Lansky, who was at his side for nearly fifty years-from the late 1920s in New York, through the opening and flourishing of the Las Vegas casinos, on to the pre-Cas

tro casinos in Havana and beyond—is notably absent from the book. He is the legendary Vincent "Jimmy Blue Eyes" Alo. Lansky and Alo went together, as one Mafioso put it to me, like "ham and eggs Like the song goes, you can't have one without the other '

Hoover is dead. Lansky is dead. Alo, while still remarkably alert, is pushing ninety years of age. Now long out of the business, he's spent time in a federal slammer Throughout a good deal of his life, he was constantly harassed, bugged, and surveilled by Hoover's FBI I got to Jimmy about the pictures that Lansky allegedly had of Hoover and Tolson. He said, "Are you nuts?"

The thought of Hoover being a nervous wreck because of Lansky's sinister hold over him becomes even more ludicrous upon examining FBI files. And you don't have to apply for them through the Freedom of Information Act They're right there for anyone to see, including Summers, in a first-rate biography of Lansky by Robert Lacey titled Little Man Meyer Lansky and the

Gangster Life. Here's one example The FBI field office in Miami, where Lansky was residing, complained to headquarters that too many of its agents were expending too much time and energy monitoring Lansky At the time, it said, "There are more important and active top hoodlums in the Miami area."

Did Hoover breathe a sigh of relief? Well, hardly. What he did was to teletype back under his name the following in capital letters: LANSKY HAS BEEN DES-IGNATED FOR QUOTE CRASH UNQUOTE IN-VESTIGATION THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS THE BUREAU EXPECTS THIS INVESTIGA-

TION TO BE VIGOROUS AND DETAILED

Nor did Hoover let it go at that He ordered that a "highly confidential source"-1 e., a bug-be used regarding Lansky Two bugs were deployed in Lansky's home, neither of which produced anything of value.

The truth about Hoover was far less racy than his rumored queerness. Although it doesn't make for big headlines, he was a law-enforcement fraud. The reasoning behind his steadfast demal of the Mafia's existence for so long was that of a classic bureaucrat. Before submitting his annual budget requests to Congress, Hoover always made sure that the past year's crime statistics listed both the



COFFIN CORNER: PETER MAA:

activities of the nation's most wanted (as defined by him) and their subsequent arrests, convictions, and incarcerations as the result of FBI investigations. Thus federal prisons were populated largely by car thieves, bank robbers, and a leged. Communists. The Mafia didn't quite fit these arrest-and-convict parameters, and considering. Hoover's stringent dress code for his agents—suits, ties, and white shirts at all times—it looked like a tough nut to crack. The solution was simple. If something didn't exist, why bother to pursue it?

The turning point in federal law en forcement against organized crime came in 1963, when a Cosa Nostra soldier, Joseph Valachi, finally broke his omertà oath and revealed the nature of the beast to an FBI agent named Jim Flynn. Until then, there had been no irrefutable evidence that organized crime was all that organized.

As a reporter, I was the first to detail publicly what Valachi had to say in a series of articles in the old Saturday Evening Post—how Cosa Nostra was first put together and structured into "families," its blood vows of fealty, its nation-

wide ruling high commission, the nowfamiliar nomenclature of its cape di tutti capi, consiglieri caperegimes, and so on

Hoover went berserk, ordering still another investigation of me, scrawling nauseating and outrageous on the reports as they came in. But his fury was not due to any fear of an exposé at Lansky's hands. True to form, he wanted to hog the headlines and had been preparing his own story about Valachi for publication under his by-line.

In the book, we are treated to yet another guaranteed shocker. J. Edgar Hoover the transvestite! The scene is a hotel suite. Present are Roy Cohn, Lewis Rosenstiel, a liquor tycoon, who was a Hoover friend, and his wife, Susan, two "young blond boys", and Hoover himself—"in a fluffy black dress. lace stockings and high heels."

The trouble is that the sole source for this is Susan Rosenstiel. The trouble also is that she'd been trying to peddle this story for years. Among those she had approached was Robert Morgenthau, a former U.S. attorney in New York and current Manhattan D.A. On paper, she couldn't have made a better

choice. Morgenthau had tried, unsuccessfully, to convict Cohn three times for various transgressions. He and Hoover were not on speaking terms. Morgenthau discovered that Rosenstiel—no paragon of civic virtue—had dumped Susan and an ugly divorce ensued. She nated Hoover, convinced he put FBI agents on her to help her husband's cause. "I didn't believe her then," Morgenthau told me, "and I don't now."

Come on you say, so what? Isn't there a little poetic justice here? Hoover on the receiving end of what he'd been dishing out. Hey, right on' But there's a flip side. The material, at best, belongs in a supermarket tabioid. At least you're forewarned. But for a book like this, published by a reputable house—with an ad headline that screams, "At last, the truth about J. Edgar. Hoover"—does grievous harm to serious investigative journalism. Poll after poll shows the media sinking in public esteem and credibility. Every so often, you have to wonder if the public doesn't have a point.

Peter Maas's seminal book on the Mafia, The Valachi Papers, is in its fifty-eighth paperback edition.





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#### LETTER FROM SOMALIA: WILLIAM VOLLMANN

## Killing Time with the Widowmakers



faced children waited in the shade, watching the five-ton. A seven-year-old girl, skinny but not skeletal, was carrying a baby on her hip. The baby stretched out his hand to the passing Marines who were pitching ration

packets to the children. When I was in Mogadishu I had seen only one child who resembled a brown skull on brown spider legs. To verify my optimistic impressions, I drove every day past one cemetery, where I invariably saw the same four gravediggers sitting under an awning by a burned-out trans-

former's mast, drinking sweet tea choked with cinnamon—"Somali whiskey," they called it They were waiting for someone to die. They said that in the good old times, tharty or forty corpses a day had been planted under the tiny markers among the cactus bushes and the poisonous boot trees for one hundred thousand shillings (twenty-five dollars) apiece; but now there were days when nobody died. The average was three or four deaths every twenty-four hours. So the gravediggers sat still in hot sand, almost out of work, because we'd called in the Marines.

The Mannes, of course, must share credit with the other branches of our armed forces, to say nothing of the French, Italian, Australian, Pakistani, and Swedish soldiers, and the relief workers, journalists, and politicians-but I never got to know the soldiers who weren't American, and as for the civilians, well. I have to admit that I did not like them much The relief workers-backbing among themselveswere as immature as missionanes. The journalists-even more curt and contemptuous than the relief workers with anyone who did not serve their turn-were marred by the additional sin of jargon pride. A typical conversation between journalists went like this: Drum roll, please. Okay, we're coming back up. Now hit control alternate T You should get a level prompt

No, the reason that the gravediggers were almost out of work was that the soldiers in desert camouflage were disarming everybody.

inside the ruined stadium where they lived, the Widow-maker Squad of the Peace Frog platoon (motto: Let me know if you're scared), which was in turn a limb of Charlie Company, passed the last minutes before going on noon patrol. "I can't wait to get out of here, so I can get my coffee brewed by electricity," said one of the Widowmakers.

"Shit, who cares about coffee? I wanna get back, buy a blender, and eat some pussy "

These manly words were spoken by none other than Corporal Brewster, Michael S. and here it occurs to me that



THE FEW, THE PROUD, THE DISARMING: Unaccustomed to a police role, the Marines often lost their cool trying to collect guns in the face of thieves and invisible snipers.

#### SOMALIA: WILLIAM

a full hsting of the roster of Widowmaker is in order, namely

1. Cpl. Baumgart Jr., Robert D.

2 Lcpl Kalan, Manhew A, "Korky"

3. Cpl Diaz, Miguel A.

Cpl Brewster, Michael S.

5. Cpl Holsinger, David S.

6 Lepl Manaloto, Jon

7 Lepl Mosley, Chuck

8. Cpl Wilson, Troy

g. Lepl. Boltman, Joseph B. "You know, I think my dad smoked

manjuana before he joined the Corps," said one.

"As long as he didn't inhale "

"As long as he didn't exhale!"

"Five minutes, guys."

"Five minutes," he said. "I'd rather be humpin' broads. Let's act crazy till they send us back "

Now the heavy flak helmets went on, sweaty and grimy and wobbly

"A flak helmet never stopped a bullet anyway, and that's a fact. The Marine that got dusted "

He had his helmet on backward And he had it pushed up over his forehead because he was hot Got drilled right in the forehead."

"What the fuck are you talking about? He got shot in the throat!"

"Okay, squad, move out Happy hunting!"

"Is Shortwave ready?"

"He's takin' a piss right now"

They pulled themselves up into the back of the five-ton, slamming down long steel benches from the walls, locking the struts into place. A Marine with a flashlight at his belt sat reading his Bible very quietly. I saw his lips move like those of the Somali I'd seen sitting barefoot in the sand outside the hospital, waiting for water

The five-ton started up and they came to the front gate, where a Marine with a gun swung a barbed-wire pole slowly outward

The name of the Marine was Corporal Prato. He'd said to me. "We Marines are strictly military, but this is a whole new ball game Now everything's fucking political. The fucking colonels are running around making everything clean and tidy. So when the higher-ups come, they don't see the real Africa "

"What's the real Africa?"

"You don't know where the enemy's coming from That's the real Africa, and that's the scary thing."

The five-ton cleared the gate, and

suddenly the Widowmaker Squad was back in the real Africa.

TN THE FIVE-TON one Marine was working the action of his M-16, lis-Lening with absolute concentration as he clicked it back and forth until he was satisfied. When the five-ton turned a corner, they all chambered rounds. The objective of the patrol was, as always, to find and confiscate as many weapons as possible.

rocks. I got hit in the face with one. Cost me three stitches \*

They stopped in front of the cigarette factory that Widowmaker had raided once before, instead of weapons maker And we have also confiscated an

they'd found only stacks of bricks. The Marines jumped out of the fiveton quickly and steadily. are strictly spreading out along the white and sandy street military," "Set up security, point and rear, one man "

Shortwave was carrying the big green radio it's a whole on his back. His buddies raised the antenna for new game. him "Suicide, Suicide, this is Widowmaker Do Everything you copy? Come in, Suicide Shit, this radio is a is political." piece of junk."

them. Most numerous were the children, who would have quickly surrounded each so dier had he let them and who commually waved, begged, practiced English, tried to sell things, and pickpocketed "One thing you gotta watch out for is a place with no women and children," a Marine said "That means they're setting something up."

They moved down the hot street, watching everything, ignoring the Somali's welcomes, which were a distraction, they were always ready to shoot, and it was sickeningly hot.

"This is Widowmaker Go. Be advised that you are coming in broken up."

"Suicide, Suicide," the kids chanted. "We got somebody up on a roof Marine said finally there Watch your ass "

Everybody was smiling, everybody followed the soldiers, soldiers walking slowly down a hot and sandy road Everybody waved at the Americans

"Level One, Level One, this is Widowmaker '

Something flickered in a window

"Get out of the way!" the Marines yelled. The children scattered; the Mannes slammed themselves against house walls in a furious rush. They waited for a long time in the hot silence, and nothing happened.

SKINNY MAN IN a baggy shirt A stood outside his ho stood outside his house, offering

"No," a Marine was saying politely. "Just watch them kids with the "If you don't have a pink card, then we must confiscate the weapon "

> "Okay I get pink card I come in one hour

"Suicide, Suicide, this is Widowassault rifle. Over."

"We Marines

he said. "But

"You think he'll turn up with his pink card in an hour?"

"Pink cards haven't even been issued yet."

After that I remember a crowd of giggling girls, and one in a violet garbashar who asked. "What's your name?"

> "Bill And you?" "Asya "

"That's a beautiful name." The other girls screeched with laughter. I saw Asya's face, pretty

Crowds of Somali swirled around and blushing, and then the sniper pulled

"Get the fuck outta the way!" the Marines shouted, shoving aside the terrified people, sprinting to the wall, kneeling for cover, waiting for the next shot to come, and it did not come.

As I too knelt in the dust, I wondered, as one always does in these situations, whether I would be dead at the end of the day When I was in Sarajevo, there were moments when I was certain that I was about to die, but this did not feel like that. Whoever had fired just now was either timid or indifferent or stupid, because he had not hit anybody and he was not firing again.

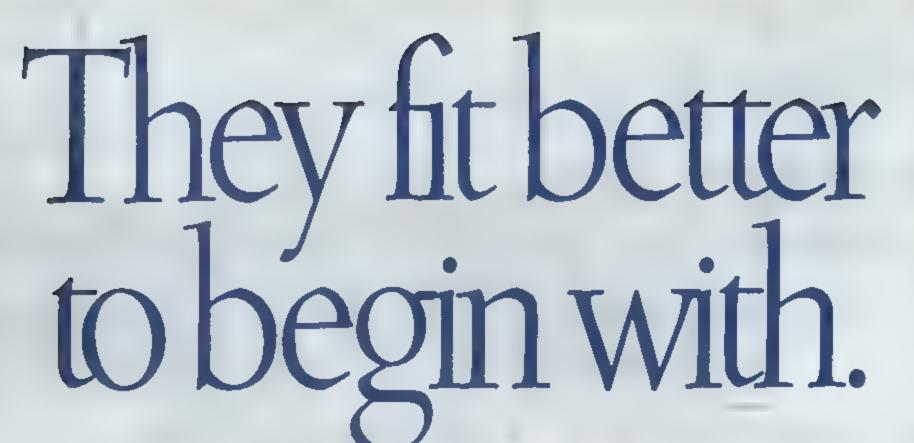
"From that high roof in the back," a

"Watch that roof"

"Let's get the fuck outta here!"

The children laughed to see the Americans duck and sprint one by one across the intersection. I was last. When it came my turn. I expected to receive the prize And again it did not come.

# New Balance shoes come with pump discs, or other pinnicks to make them fit hetter?





See that tennis shoe on the left of this page?

You can't inflate it with air. There's no Disc Closure Unit for you to fiddle with.

Why on earth would anyone buy it?
Because it fits.

#### A shoe that fits better, performs better.

Other athletic shoe companies build their tennis shoes on the same last (the plastic form that gives a shoe its shape) they use for their running shoes.

The CT675 pictured here, however, is built on one specifically designed to accommodate the lateral movement in court sports.

More importantly, it's sized to match not just your foot's length, but its precise width—whether it's B (really narrow), EEEE (really wide) or something in between.

, A	ARROW .				- WIDE	1	NARROW		- WID
MEN	AA	B	D	EE	EEEE	WOMEN	AA	В	D
CXT770						WCT500			
CXT600						WCT360			
CXT525									
CT675				•					
CT545					•				
CT500									
CT320									

This means you won't have to inflate the CT675 to make it snugger, or adjust its disc to make it looser. It'll fit correctly the moment you put it on.

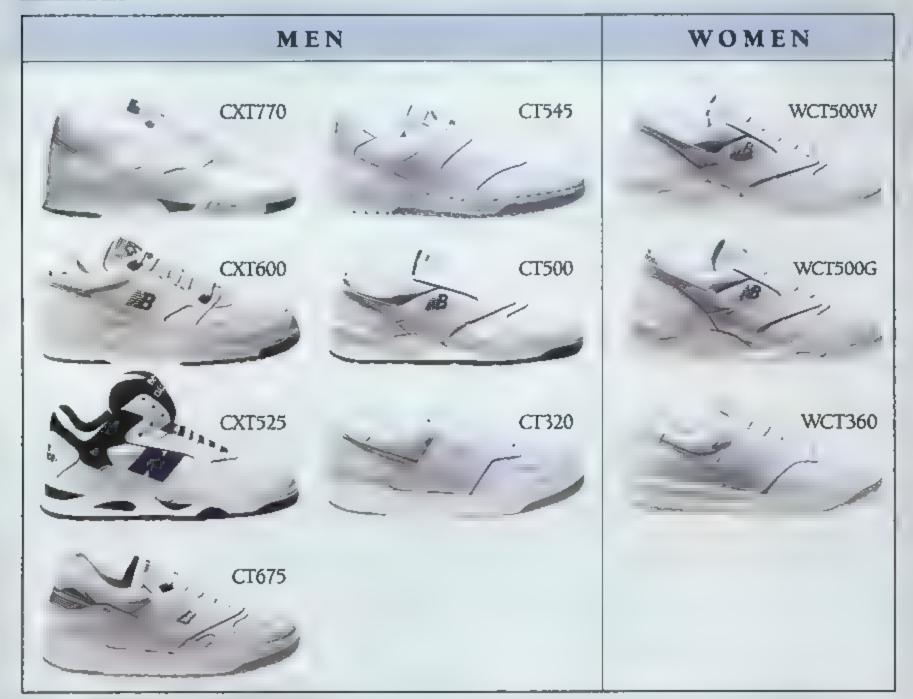
It also means you can take full advantage of New Balance's technological virtues, including a ProLong® Polyurethane outsole that provides better traction and durability than rubber no matter what surface you play on.

What the CT675 gives you, in other words, are all the gimmicks you truly need in a tennis shoe: none.



## What kind of shoe do you need? What kind of tennis player are you?

	Frequent Player	Hard Court Player	Clay Court Player	Extra Shock Absorption For High Impact	Need Extra Stability/ Lateral Motion Control	Extra Ankle Support	Accommo- dates Orthotics	Drag Ioe on Serve (Extra Rein- forcement)	Lightweight Shoes	All Court (Squash, Racquetball, Tennis)
MEN	CXT770 CXT600 CXT525 CT675 CT500 CT320	CXT770 CXT600 CXT525 CT675 CT545 CT500 CT320	CXT770 CXT600 CT675 CT320	CXT525 CT675 CT500 CT320	CXT770 CXT600 CXT525	CXT770 CXT525	CXT770 CXT600 CXT525 CT675 CT545 CT500 CT320	CXT770 CXT600	CXT600 CT675 CT320	CXT770 CXT600 CXT525
WOMEN	WCT500 WCT360	WCT500 WCT360	WCT360	WCT500 WCT360	WCT500	WCT500	WCT500 WCT360	WCT500	WCT500 WCT360	WCT500



For a free brochure and the New Balance dealer nearest you, call 1-800-253-SHOE.

"Now I've lost my fucking calm," a patrol. We all came back." Marine said

Later they stopped a CARE van and discovered a gun

"You have ID? Which of you has the ID? Bring the weapon up here."

"This number right here on your authorization form-21695-and this weapon, they're not the same. This is tellin' you guys about. She wrote back! for an AK and this is

A soldier

said, "Don't

an HK "

The Somah grew more and more angry, waving his hands. The Marine showed him the be surprised discrepancy again and again, with stony par if you see

"Now here come tempers fray the rocks.

As the five-ton began tonight. We to pull away, the children began to rain only know stones in among the soldiers, rattling off flak how to kill." helmets, stingingly strik-

ing a wrist or a knee. "Better rocks than rounds," a Marine muttered

T'S BECAUSE SOME MEN give small money to babies, tell them. Throw stones American!' Because Americans take their weapons."

My friend Abdi said this. He had lived through the worst in Mogadishu. In his house he proudly uncovered a young boy's nakedness, and I understood that Abdi's son had just been circumcised "I have boy now," he told me exultantly "Now I'm no more afraid! I can go anywhere! I am free! I have a son! They cannot kill me anymore!"

But the following night he and his family did not sleep, because bandits were shooting, "Thief is have knife, pis-tol, gun—all of them!" he said. "My gun is here in truck, hidden in good place. I afraid for Marines. If they find, how can I defend? Better to leave our guns. If I keep my gun in sight, thief is afraid."

His logic was perfect. That was why a money changer I met smiled and said. "We buried our best weapons before the Americans got here."

T WAS AGAINST these mysterious forces, these sly thieves and invisible snipers, that the Widowmaker Squad was struggling. They returned to the stadium, unchambering their bullets as they entered. "Well, that was a good

"What's next, night patrol?"

"Just a roadblock-6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M., checkin' for weapons."

Now it was mail call, and whoops echoed around the ruined stadium. "Ho! Fourteen pages!"

"This one's from that stripper I was

Listen to this: 'I remember that you were very nice and intelligent."

"She must not remember you very well."

They sat in a pit of sandbags for hours, running their fingers along the blades of their Gerbers, gazing lost into their letters. It was so peaceful that, for a moment, it was easy to forget about the warlords Mr Aidid and Mr Mahdi, whose enmity divided the city be-

tween them. Not too surprisingly, neither one had had time to see me. I did, however, get an opportunity to see the guards behind the steel gates at Aidid's, smoking cigarettes, jiggling twigs between their pouty lips, masturbating the barrels of their AK-47's. "Marines never come here," a man crowed to me. "This office Aidid!"

They were calmly self-confident faces that I saw here, faces that did not beg like so many others but that turned upon me the cool beams of their aloof dislike. Their power in Somalia can best be gauged by the fact that almost every day someone would ask me: "What is your tribe?" (I always replied. "My tribe is your tribe ")

Everyone blamed the thieves, of course, that was easter While the Widowmakers rested, I went to the prison and talked to a robber, a skinny brownish-black man in a dirty yellow shirt who stood at attention for me

"Why are you here?" I asked him. "I steal a bed to sell I was hungry. But police catch me."

"When you leave prison will you steal again?"

"No," he said by rote.

"What if you are hungry again?"

"I want to live. I see many people die from hunger. If I don't steal, maybe I will die like these people."

"Are you hungry now?"

"No," he said, but again I thought by rote, and when I asked him if he had anything further to say, he said. "The only thing I want to tell you is that most people eat three meals a day. I get only one meal a day here. That's what I want to tell you."

HEN IT WAS NIGHT and the Widowmaker Squad headed back into the real Africa for roadblock duty The Marines happily took the evening wind. All those brooding male faces, staring into their own dreams, rattled and lurched as the track carried them down the road.

"Don't be surprised if you see tempers fray tonight," a soldier said to me. "This ain't our job. We only know how

When the headlights came, they raised their weapons, and fingers beckoned each vehicle into the sand at the edge of the road. "Hey! Hey! Open it!"

"Have a mice night," a Marine was saying to the former general of the Somali army "Thanks for the weapon."

The Somali pulled out an incomprehensible document

"What's this? What's this mean?" The former general explained, smil-

"We're gonna hold on to this, okay?" said the Marine as patiently as he could. "Put your name on this document. You can get it at the U.S. embassy."

"What's your name?" said the former general.

"It don't matter," said the Marine. "Just go to the embassy Wednesday."

In the middle of that long, cool night of desert stars the radio crackled, and then a Manne said softly, "Second platoon got hit. In the same place where we patrolled today and they shot at us,1

"Shit. Shit Who is it?"

"I don't know yet He was a point man, and they heard a garage door open and then the sound of a weapon being cocked. I don't know how bad he's hit, but they say he's getting CPR."

The morning came, chilly with dew. "He didn't make it." a Marine said "He held on for a little while, that's all."

Unchambering rounds, they returned to the stadium in quiet weariness. The flag was not yet at half-mast. I felt sad and tired. When I saw Abdi I told him. He sighed, "I tell you, there is so many thiefs in the night, you know!" a

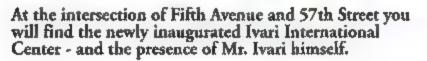
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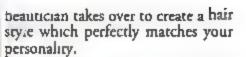
Microcapillography is a scientific analysis of your hair and scalp. By studying the capillary cycle, Ivari researchers have succeeded in precisely diagnosing the scalp structure-determining with precision the daily rate of hair growth, the degree of hair loss, and the re-commended treatment. This analysis identifies vitamin deficiencies, as well as the exact needs of your particular type of hair. This is a preventive examination, used to establish a personalized hair care program if needed.

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degree of waviness and finess. The new hair which will perfectly complement your own hair, is then selected, and processed in the laboratory it's ull texture and sheen. A



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### THE RAW AND THE COOKED: JIM HARRISON

#### **Borderlands**



NCE AGAIN my birthday was allowed to pass unremarked by my government, the world's most powerful autistic child, big as all outdoors. Over the years I have sent them a fortune with nary a word of thanks. At any given moment I could be pitched into prison for no clearly announced reasons. My health has been shattered by dread. Luckily this is only the mood of the moment, because it is this precise nexus of emotions that led Hemingway to point the gun in the wrong direction,

wing shooting the frightened old bird that had become his brain We can't become inconsolable just because life is incomprehensible. Nature, art, food, and sex stand tethered like a hobbyhorse to a stair railing, waiting to carry us away, no matter that ten thousand "political trollops" continue to pee

on the grave of the future. This kind of solid thinking and ten bucks will get you a cup of coffee in New York.

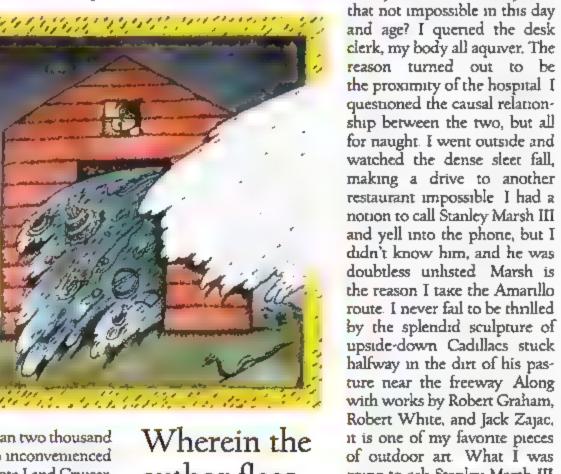
It used to be that birthdays meant something. In my family a birthday meant you got what you wanted for dinner, which for me meant pickled herringusually homemade from a keg of salt herring—and beefsteak, both foods sonorous with fiber and eager to help build the man I would become. Frankly, I have always found the song "Happy Birthday" to be odious, right up there with "Achy Breaky Heart" and "Happy Days Are Here Again," and have never allowed it in my presence.

My wife and I had fled Michigan like orphans in a storm, not quite outrunning

the three blizzards that tracked us for more than two thousand miles. Quite by accident, these blizzards also inconvenienced other travelers. My 4WD utility vehicle, a Toyota Land Cruiser, was in the hands of a hired driver taking another route, and we were in my wife's Saab, a car she has favored for years, despite the fact that out in the Big Country, Saab drivers make moues and wave at one another, which embarrasses her, as it should

Anyway, we reached Amarillo in a state of trembling exacerbation, avoiding the Big Texan and its scrumptious five-pound sirloins and wandering minstrels, because I wanted something a little more refined. We checked into a Best Western near a hospital, always a comforting sight should an asteroid strike nearby. There have been a lot of scare stories about incipient asteroid attacks of late, and they have replaced black holes at the top of my fear list

Now, Best Western had always been my favorite motel chain, but when I trotted up front to check the restaurant menu, I discovered this one was dry You heard me, dry Was



author flees blizzards, floods, and a chorus of "Happy Birthday"

reason turned out to be the proximity of the hospital I questioned the causal relationship between the two, but all for naught. I went outside and watched the dense sleet fall, making a drive to another restaurant impossible. I had a notion to call Stanley Marsh III and yell into the phone, but I didn't know him, and he was doubtless unlisted Marsh is the reason I take the Amarillo route. I never fail to be thrilled by the splendid sculpture of upside-down Cadillacs stuck halfway in the dirt of his pasture near the freeway Along with works by Robert Graham, Robert White, and Jack Zajac, it is one of my favorite pieces of outdoor art. What I was going to ask Stanley Marsh III is. Why not embed giant, upside-down, empty liquor bottles outside dry establishments, thus creating art that would also be a boon and a warning to the weary traveler?

Lucky for me I remembered that the two pairs of Paul Bond boots in my trunk contained, for protection, a Beaucaillou '75 and a Calon Segur of the same year It seemed a shame to use such fabled (and jostled) bottles on a One day while I was quail hunting in a room-service meal that included a con- remote spot, a pair of golden eagles folchicken-fried steak with cream gravy, which I turned pinkish with my Tabasco travel miniatures, but where was I to turn? We became merry indeed, so the waitress was also happy and did not comment when my bird dog Tess thrust her nose far up under her skirt when she bent over Dogs are gender neutral when it comes to their noses

Things picked up the next day, even it began to rain, and the though we were trapped in Lordsburg, New Mexico, by another storm It occurred to me to adopt my son-in-law's custom of a birth week rather than limit phone-company execumyself to the solitary day A sound decision that defied the frenetic pace of our selves this pleasure It out of here, culture, I thought, while packing the car and noting that the dog had eaten most of a fine slab of bacon we had bought at Robertson's Hams in Seminole, Oklahoma (800-346-1408) This explained why she kept getting off my bed during the night for water We joined each other in a trot along the snow-laden railroad tracks, bent on purging ourselves of the trip's gross fodder

OUNTING MY CABIN, I live three quarters of the year near the Canadian or Mexican border Due to lack of ambient light and air pollution, the nights remind you of your forest night. The stars were much closer casita. I dozed alertly, getting up now then, and you could see the cinders in their bright smiles, and the Milky Way was a dense ermine floss, a cumulus of stars. One aches for this cosmological intimacy On the borders you see again in the clarity of the air these presumably same stars of your youth. They soothe rattlesnakes raced past, though they you and make you a member of the universe, the tronies dissipate, and you shiver with the marvelous recognition of mortality that is a primary gift of the natural world

On arrival my birth week continued in my favorite area restaurants, Er Pastora, Mr C's, and Las Vigas, where in turn I are my beloved puttanesca and mussels posilipo, cabrilla with garlic sauce, to taste like when questioned on the matter Equally delicious to a flatlander is the foreignness of the biotic commu-

agave, and cholla, the sheer uniqueness of javelina, coatimundi, and roadrunner

could only

dimly make

Feets get me

their business I could see myself clearly from I heard a their point of view when I skidded down a whoosh but long creek embankment on my muddy ass.

Then one morning phone ended up being out of order for a couple Out the water. of weeks. Important continued raining for nearly a week, and we I thought. feared Sonoita Creek

fifty feet down the bank from our front door Then the rain let up for a few days, and we were reheved when the waters subsided a foot or two on a mark we imagined on a fallen cottonwood across the creek I was about ready for a night of untroubled sleep and stoked the fire, looking around with pleasure at the absence of a television set, when the skies fairly opened and staved open all night This is not supposed to happen in the high, mountainous desert, where the wachocolate-colored torrent At first light I heard a whoosh of sorts but could only dimly make out the water A huge cortonwood shot by like an arrow, and great balls of flushed tarantulas and dormant might have been tumbleweed and sticks packed a few essentials, which in my case meant my favorite shotgun and what I call my "art" a sheaf of poems and a half-written novella. We fled, as it were, and the sight of the flood in full daylight gave us tremors. A fifteen-foot-wide creek was now a quarter of a mile across.

We were without food an entire and machaca, which is what cattle aspire hour before moving in with friends Second thoughts began to arise by midmorning, as our friends' refrigerator was barren of interesting items. I recalled I be published by Houghton Mifflin next year

few Grand Crus, including a Ducru nity the unthinkable shapes of ocotillo, had stowed a selection of Italian wines in a closet, including a Lungarotti Rubesco, an Isole e Olena, a Satice Salentino, all purchased from the Rumrunner, a splendid wine-and-food shop in Tucfused-looking stir fry, a rib steak, and a lowed me for a while, their position as a son, right down the street from one of possible omen quickly evaporating in the best grocery stores between the the grandeur of their "selves" going about coasts, Reay's The leaden, weepy skies

cried out for these health potions, as well as some breathtaking steaks sent from Boyle's in Kansas Ciry Luckily I had a cudgel in the car that could double as a wading staff, the kind you use while frout fishing difficult rivers. We literally fought our way through the mud, debris, and current to get the wine and meat, my heart racing at the peril

> A few days later, in the aftermath. I searched the arroyos for bodies and

would flood, a bit of a problem since it's the gold nuggets the sluicing water might have revealed. I was told to do so by someone in a local bar called the Big Steer, certainly a reliable source

N OBVIOUSLY simpleminded correspondent has reminded me that ▲ I promised some "words to live by" every month Here's something we can all do when we become quarrelsome with wives, husbands, roommates An argument had started over how long to saute a turkey liver for the cats, and youth, the peerless air of the northern ter can only drain downhill toward our. I had reminded the little woman that she had blown the lasagna back in July and then to shine a flashlight out on the 1966 by using insufficient sauce. Tempers flared around the home, so early next morning we took a dozen eggs out the back door and hurled them against an immense rock formation. How wonderful the crisp crack and splatter against the morning song of the canyon wren If you live in the city, there are plenty of Feets get me out of here, I thought, and we rock-solid buildings that will work just as well, since eggs at a buck a dozen beat out some fungoid marriage counselor mouthing manities about bonding, a word with all the resonance of pedophile

> TOT TIPS The wonderfully unpre-Thennous writing of South Dakota's Linda Hasselstrom (Fulcrum Publishing, Golden, Colorado) 14

Jim Harrison is finishing a new book of novellas to



If we were just any beer, we'd probably need a pretty picture.



Just being the best is enough.

#### THE SPORTING LIFE: MIKE LUPICA

#### The Man Beneath the Halo



ALWAYS TELLS THE AIRLINES to send two strong men to meet him at the gate. Sometimes they send men who look too weak. Or too small. Sometimes they send two women, and sometimes the airlines send a couple of baggage handlers to help Mike Utley on or off the plane. The weighs 250 pounds, only 30 less than he did when he played on the offensive line for the Detroit Lions. He tells you what he can do with 100-pound dumbbells and 200-pound lat pulls, how much he can press

in the weight room. "Sitting in this chair I can still knock anybody out with one punch," he says. "So how come nobody can fix my neck?"

In so many ways, Utley is stronger and tougher than he ever was on a footbal, field. He just needs help sometimes And sometimes that help must come from strangers. They

cheered when

Dennis Byrd

steps. Who's

rooting for

have to help him out of the huge Quickie wheelchair that America carries him through his life They have to carefully place him in a smaller, "aisle" chair, and when he gets to first classthere is too much of him, even now, for a seat in coach—they took his first have to lift him out of the asle chair and into his seat.

Today one of the men sent to help him at LaGuardia Airport is too small. Utley will later describe him to people as Mike Utley? "toothless and eighty."

"Are you sure you can lift me up?" Utley says.

"I think so," the man says. "You think so "

"I'll do my best "

Not long ago Utley was a big tough kid out of Washington who didn't mind that he had to travel from Pullman to Spokane "to find a mall with more than three stores in it." He was a real comer when he got to Detroit, where he was supposed to block for the great Barry Sanders and protect quarterbacks. But he went into the air and landed on his head one Sunday while doing his job. It cost him the use of his legs.

You can watch the play

over and over and never understand why this hit-one in a million that occur every autumn in pro football-put him in a wheelchair That's just the way it happens in sports

In May this column is usually about baseball players running across green ball fields, about Strawberry or Puckett and the promise of a long season to come. This time it is about the dark, sad side of football, about heroics that we don't get to see on relevision. It is about a man who once stood tall against the NFL's most fearsome linebackers and now pleads with men half his size: "Please don't drop me."

It is about Mike Utley and his own long season

THE SLEEK CAR heads south down Interstate 95 from Connecticut Utley is in the front seat, his girlfriend, Debbie Riddle, and I are in the back. We are on our way to Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, where Utley will visit with a buddy he met in a college all-star game-Dennis Byrd of the New York Jets

Along the way, he describes the sorrow he felt when he learned about pro football's latest tragedy. He was in De-

troit, he says, when Riddle got a call from her sister one Sunday evening

"Did you see what happened to that football player?" she said "They think he's paralyzed '

"What player?" Riddle asked.

"Somebody for the Jets"

On the TV news, Utley watched them wheel Byrd off the field on one of those golf carts, his neck and spine held in place by a backboard. "I had hoped that I would be the last one to have an injury like this," he said

But Byrd has shown tremendous progress since that November day. "He'li be walk-



JOE CIARDIELLO

#### LABORATORY TESTING PROVES:

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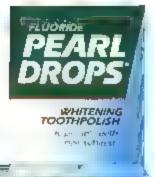


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ing before you know it," Utley says now to God he gets his ass out of that damn chair Takes one snapshot, just to have a record of it, then never looks at it again "

Utley's rehabilitation, though steady, hospitals," he says, nodding. has been much less storied. There are no miracle endings-at least not yet His Riddle explains long season started eighteen months ago in Detroit's Silverdome when he landed headfirst on the artificial turf The collision damaged the disk between the sixth and seventh vertebrae in his neck, rupturing the spinal canal

After surgery Utley spent seven weeks in a halo vest-custom-made because of his size—his head and neck immobilized. He would not allow himself to be photographed in the vest, he says, because he did not want that to be the picture of record, the one everyone remembered "I did not want parents to see me and have that scare them so much it scared their kids out of football I was a football player my whole life I'm a football player who happened to get hurt That's the way I look at things."

Utley eventually left Detroit for Craig Hospital, near Denver After an arduous rehabilitation, he was able to pull himself along on the parallel bars, using the strength in his arms and his upper body Then he graduated to a fourlegged crutch known as a granny walker Now he can move toes, the arches of his feet, and muscles in his left calf. He has some sensation in his thighs. But most movement in his legs is involuntary. His immediate goal is to strap his legs into your life in a paper bag," Utley says. braces and walk on crutches "Get mythe kitchen if I want to," he says

Doctors originally suggested that this would never be possible. But Utley

keeps surprising them.

"Tell me what the consequences are if I want to try something," he says. "Don't tell me about rules. They're made to be broken. " He pauses "Like necks."

FOUNT SINAL IS ON the left side of Madison Avenue. The limou-Sine driver pulls up on the right so Utley can take his time getting out of the car He fits himself into the wheelchair, and Riddle leans down to make sure his feet, adorned by these terrific boa cowboy boots, are strapped in

"They'll flop all over the place if they're not," Utley says.

We want for the light to change, in the car "It's different for him I pray then cross the street as quickly as the wheelchair will go. Utley is staring at the front doors of the hospital

"Doors are always big enough at

"They can be a problem otherwise,"

On Thanksgiving Day last year, NBC broadcast a feature story about Utley Watching from his home, Dennis Byrd cried as Gayle Gardner described Utley's heroic struggle to rehabilitate himself Four days later Byrd was being fitted for a halo vest of his own.

The two men, old football-playing warmors, sit together now in an empty classroom in Mount Sinai, talking about much better days. Utley hands Byrd a Jets cap with THUMBS UP-the slogan of the Mike Utley Foundation written over the team logo. Then they shift just as easily into a conversation about the injuries that put them in these wheelchairs. At week's end Byrd will leave Mount Sinai, walking on crutches into a press conference to say goodbye to his supporters. There is no sign of envy or resentment from Utiley If anything, he takes on the role of cheerleader, offense rooting on the defense

"If you're not walking in a month," he says, "I'm gonna come looking for you, and then no more Mr Nice Guy"

Steadily the conversation moves toward the future. Both players agree that they would not discourage children from playing the game "You can't live

At a charity dinner for the Connectiself up and go from the living room to cut Special Olympics the next night, while word spreads across the world that Arthur Ashe has passed away, Utley's courageous battle is rewarded with a standing ovation "Like I said," he tells me, "you wake up in the morning and thank God for getting you through another night" He turns around in his wheelchair and goes back to join the party Later I see him out on the dance floor, in the middle of all these couples, doing wheelies, making amazing quick turns, laughing with his head thrown back as the dinner band plays "The Twist"

His season does not ever end. The days and nights are long. Some nights are better than others Maybe it is the cheers from the crowd Maybe the cheers make Mike Utley dance. 18

Mike Lupica writes for the New York Daily News.

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THE STRENGTH OF EXPERIENCE

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: STANLEY BING

#### **Dudes! Get a Life!**



HERE ARE NO JOBS, as you know. Oh, there's the one you now hold. There's the one held by your friend Arnie. Beyond that, nada. You look out over the near middle-distance, and there's the horizon all right, misty with promise and the smell of frankfurters cooking. Then you take a step forward and bonk! You hit your nose on it. Bump your forehead, too. Limited vistas, that's the ticket. More than a hundred thousand jobs gone phlooey at IBM. Nearly the same at General Motors. Around here, we lost

about 20 percent of our body fat, and I'll be honest with you, we're feeling a whole lot better. We're down to fighting weight! I know I am Frankly, I could lose a couple more without squealing about it. You should see the dent I still make in my chair At least I have a chair! A lot of people don't and aren't likely to either One of these days they'll let us do something

about that, mark my words, and then maybe I'll hire you. A few kind Or maybe not. Maybe you'll get on my nerves. Or maybe words to the you won't. Right now, it doesn't matter But still, we young, not do wanna meetcha. Especially you young folks in your twen really gifted, ties, because we can buy two real person. The problem 18, you're such a bunch of dorks.

of you for the price of one and somewhat tiresome



Yes, here you come skulking over in suits that look far too good on you, with furtive expressions and huge fronds of bushy hair that sprout like mushroom caps from the clean, scrubbed stalk of your skinny little necks. Interviewing you for nonexistent positions is part of our job, but a lot of the time it's a bummer, I don't mind telling you. Know why? You guys are depressing, that's why Your entire generation That's right. When I lock my door at the end of the day and drag my still-quite-viable butt down to the parking garage and hand in my ticket and stand vacantly in the waiting area, munching a nice, tasty wad of Bazooka, it's you drippy little wieners that I'm worried about. What a waste of perfectly good youth you represent.

Last Monday, for instance, this guy comes in He knows there's no 10b, because I've told him so. "That's okay," he tells me on the phone. Really? Why? Doesn't he want a job? Doesn't he have anything better to do with his time? Walk in the park, maybe? Meet a friend for a midday bop? Fine I say I'll see him at 10 30. He comes in twenty minutes early, a sign of overeagerness that annoys me. "He's early," I teil Betty, my assistant. We are looking over catalogues of laser-printer carridges, and I am loath to be disturbed "He says he doesn't mind waiting," she says Great I let him wait. Not too long. He comes in and seats himself carefully on the edge of my guest chair. He is staring at the toys on my desk, trying to suppress the realization that I am an infantile nit whose job he could probably do much better, given what a serious person he is I see he has the dread disease of his age group, earnest oversobnery. Of course he does not play with the toys, even my tiny pool table that has real working cues and pockets. He looks out my window instead. "Nice view," he says rather perfunctorily, but he does not say, "Wow!" which is what my view of the canyons and spires of high-mercantile capitalism deserves He seems to be suffering from an insufficiency of self. I ask him to tell me a little about the incandescent majesty that is his persona. He immediately whales into his desire to get into business. I find that I am already beginning to doze off. This happens to me but not often so quickly. "Yeah," I say, standing up and walking around to fend off total somnolence, "but what do you want to be doing? When you toss



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#### STANLEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

to it, I mean "

"I'm looking for an entry-level position in public relations. Maybe corporate marketing, if I get lucky," he says

"Really?" I say "Like, out of the entire realm of human possibility, that's what you want to be doing?" I'm sorry He's really starting to tweeze my bumpus What twenty-four-year-old really and truly wants to be in corporate marketing, for God's sake? If, on the other hand, what he's saying is only a posture, it's possible the guy could be a hypocnte. This is a more mature attribute than, say, mappropriate honesty, and one I respect in a potential business as sociate I look him over as he burbles on about targeting demos or retrofitting corporate superstructures or some frigging thing like that The guy makes me want to stand up on my desk and say, "Boogabooga!" Instead, I say, "Didn't you ever want to be a rock musician or a forest ranger or anything?" He looks at me like I have a banana peel on the end of my nose. It's quite clear to me that, since he was in high school, he's been preparing to be a communicator That's acno poetry in this dude. No surf or wind of my office

individual will be holed up in a bar, drinking a circumspect Chardonnay and complaining about how people of his generation never get a fair shake, his generation's cry "Unfair" they say "Waaaaah" To which any thinking person in business has to stop and say, "Right on' Keep complaining, buds! We can't wait for you to come on boardi"

We can't either As hard as it may be to believe, we don't want you to fail We want you to succeed big-time We're older, true. But you're much wiser And in the end, I think we have a lot to offer each other. In that spirit, I'd like to offer some attitude adjustment and strategic solutions to your current problems

Wear that earring with pride! The tiny little ear node is your generation's major contribution to our civilization Don't stille your best stuff A guy I table and you've gone a long way to-

out all the bullshit and get right down tually what he says. Screw it There is know actually took out his bitsy stud when he went to interview for a job at or whalebone in his eye. He's desic- a very big corporate entity, resorting to cated He makes me sad I kick him out one of those little circular Band-Aids to hide his pierced status. Ridiculous! I know that somewhere tonight this Places like IBM, Raytheon, and the Rand Corporation want you to be you, man, not somebody else! So be yourself in a huge way Those of you who can pull it off might consider doing an entire Seattle grunge thing to let the other guys know that you're in touch with what's hottest in derivative fin-desiècle pseudoculture

> Microthink! It's what you do! Other generations that came before (and maybe even those that will come after) are capable of depth, resonance, and extended concentration You're not On the bright side, your minds are able to skip over topics like a flat stone over a man-made reflecting pool You don't read anything but magazines. You watch video wallpaper You feel nostalgic for the most commercialized and flatulent decade in American history-the 1970s Bring that quick, flashy insight to the





#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY STANLEY BING

ward differentiating yourself from the one else! In fact, it's quite possible that competition Show 'em that without guys like you around, nobody's going to know what people with minimal attention spans are thinking.

Be your ultracool, dispassionate self! Older folks still get all het up about stuff they think is wasteful and idione. They hate their enemies and are envious of their friends. They are passionate and dedicated to their own stupid notions and schemes. After spending some time with guys in their twenties, I've come to see that almost nothing really engages their deepest muscles, that everything can be either taken or left, depending on the circumstances and audience A pal of mine who is barely out of cap and knickers works for a boutique advertising agency Not long ago, it was savaged in the leading industry trade magazine, which purveyed assorted rumors of its management's demise, the future sale of the business all the usual, unsourced rotgut that passes for business reporting nowadays I called him up to rail at the unfairness of it all but found him strangely unmoved. "They got part of it right," he said with the icy lack of irranonality that characterizes his youthful demographic "The rest will be forgotten by next week " Now that's sangfroid Where do I get some?

Flaunt your lack of new ideas! It makes you strong! In most businesses today, when timidity and lack of yeast is the rule, the worst thing you can say about a project or concept is, "Gee, I don't think I've ever seen anything like it before!" I have seen executives roll up like hedgehogs under the weight of that comment, sading under a nearby conference table to protect their flanks. Your great strength as a generation is the absolute lack of freshness you bring to any subject, the liberating willingness to dress up yesterday's solutions in slightly new garb and call it fabulous and wow and pow Around here they call that skill remarketing-and they pay people for it

Live lite! It's fun! While other men are laboring under a yoke of house. spouse, kids, and car, you've got none of that baggage! You're unencumbered! You can volunteer for any hazardous or Stanley Bing is the author of Crazy Bosses and odious daty with no thought for any-

you don't really care at all about anyone else I had drinks the other day with about five or six fine representatives of your species, average age about twenty-seven Not only did none express any interest in emotional commitments of any sort, the majority expressed their belief that true, long-term romantic love was no longer possible. Make that refreshing weightlessness of spirit clear to your prospective emplover It's the kind of headset that business really knows how to use to best advantage

Above all else-stay focused! Do

not waste your time kicking dirt around the nether regions of Europe, Mexico, downtown New York, or any other Third World country. Do not take two years off to study bread making or beekeeping or borscht. Do not become an actor touring in a dinner-theater production of The Fantasticks for a couple of years. Do not spend a thousand hours programming a computer game in which Michael Ovitz takes over the world unless you can stop him. Do not spend several years waking at noon, having a piece of cold pizza for breakfast, taking the dog for a walk, going over to see your girlfriend, maybe catching a late-afternoon movie, and, afterward, walking home together staring in the windows of restaurants you cannot afford, dreaming of what you just might do when you grow up, sell out, and start making money Do not remain young and impetuous one minute longer than is absolutely necessary, frittering away the critical decade in which your success or failure will be irrevocably determined by doing anything less than keeping your nose well grindstoned and your eye on whatever is placed directly in front of it

In short, dudes, do exactly what you've been doing. Live up to your potential. Lose your youth faster than any group has ever done before. Hone your skills and build your business biceps and prepare for the moment when you take the reins of power from the largest and most influential generation in history Make sure you're ready Then come knocking Don't worry, we'll be here.

Waiting, M

is a contributing editor of this magazine



Esquire

The Last Pinup

In which
Demi Moore
considers
a shocking
proposal and
comes to the
right decision.
Probably.

By Michael Angeli Photographs by Steven Klein







by figures in art. I find sculptural. The real to take my clothes off."





## TAKED WOMEN WERE never forbidden to us. On the contrary, we had full breasts swung in our hungry faces the moment we left the womb.

Later, as we faced teenage years in awkward hormonal spurts, desperately fighting to conceal the weedy secret of our sexuality but fooling no one, the pinup was contraband and secret knowledge, an undeclared sovereignty, a glimpse of how we would be ruled by imagery that de-

notes freedom, liberation, fulfillment, a dream date

Our covetousness for the pinup was like oxygen passing through the crease of a fat hp after a fight. It tingled, hurt, but there was no stopping the surge of vitality it sent to the flower at the center of the brain. The pictures were so clear, so inviting, so welcoming, you could fall into them, the earth and skin tones glowing and indescent. As adults shamed by a politically correct world, we envy the lout who insensately pages through the girlie magazines for his courage and despise him for his coarseness. We pity the woman in the picture, pity ourselves for being seduced by her, pity ourselves for never being able to have her, then get on with our work Sneaking a peak, then, has come full circle, our dirty little male secret, like crying at the movies

And now Demi Moore, that morphing version (now you see her, now you don't ) of a Nanenes Varga girl, has come to play punup for us here in New York Waiting for her to get undressed, I have a few more moments to baste under the juices of my rising panic. I d rather stick my head in the mouth of a tiger than do what I'm about to do, and there just happens to be one available. A van parked inside the too-hip photo studio holds a four-hundred-pound Bengal tiger named Suki, to be used as a prop for one of Demi's shots. Without any room to pace, Suko has taken to shifting her weight from paw to paw, like a rapper whose toes have been broken by a women's-rights activist. With her massive flanks swaying, the tiger's eyes never leave me, as if to say, "Go on, spit it out! Ask her!"

A diminutive queen bee. Demi is ringed by professional preeners doing her nails, her eyebrows, her makeup Facing the mirror, surrounded by little lights the size of jawbreakers, Demi addresses my image with playful

suspicion She's radiant as a day in May, the upturned corners of her eyes giving off a liquid sparkie heavy with feminine minerals

"Come on, come on," she prods me, "I hear you have something

weird you want to ask me "

Now, at the moment of truth, my premise suddenly feels prosciutto thin In her new movie, Indecent Proposal, a wealthy stranger (Robert Redford) offers a happily married Demi a million dollars to spend the night with him Color me delusional, but I thought just maybe she'd kiss me for five hundred. Only now that I'm here, in front of the real deal, my heart is palpitating tike a defective fluorescent tube. I'm all stomach and no guts, with the contract I had drafted for the transaction—a mere piece of paper tucked in my breast pocket—feeling as thick and encumbering as a flak jacket.

"Let me guess," Demi croaks in that sublime voice of hers. "You want

The word panties causes me to flinch, as if a bad hop at shortstop stung me in the cheekbone. I've always had trouble with the word, since I somehow lack the facial equipment to say it without having it sound like an accounting term

"What is it—a blowjob?" Demi's rolling now. Her nail woman titters into a cuticle while the others yuk it up, all with the exception of Serge the

## When Demi and I kiss, will she think my discretion a handicap and pity my wife? If I'm too willing, will she pity me? Do I open my eyes or risk chipping my teeth?

hairstylist, who responds with a single throb in his temple. I feel the words forming in my mouth, flimsy and frail

"Well, I have a proposition to make I thought I could kiss you in exchange for \$500 " Serge's eyes expand to the size of diaphragm cases, but his comb deftly follows Demi s head as, for the first time, she turns away from the mirror to get a glimpse of the real me. Astonished, Demi gawks as if I've walked in the room wearing nothing but spectator pumps and a pair of painted-on boxer shorts

"Oh, my God, I'm so embarrassed," she says with a laugh, almost losing the towel covering her body. A blush wells up in rosy harlegum blotches up around her mouth "You're kidding, aren't you?" Here was my chance to catch the last metro to self-esteem. Unfortunately, I had only large bills.

"Uh, no. I'm not "

"What kind of a kiss?" asks Demi I hand her a copy of the contract, describing the terrible details of our agreement. As she reads it to herself, chuckling as she goes along, Serge's eyes resemble Magic Johnson's when he used to run the fast break, looking for someone to hit in the passing lanes. He finishes reading before Demi does and gives me a quick, conspiratorial grin

"What does your wife say about this? Or didn't you tell her?" Demi asks

Indeed, I had. I can still see that look on her face, the bored and superior lassitude of a carry who guesses everybody's age. My wife, who is the Sergei Bubka of decorum, the Henry Ford of supplanting jealousy with disdain, wanted to know where I would get the money Hoping to Pontius Pilate my way out, I told her the magazine might cover it

"Then have her kiss the magazine," she joked I think Demi faces her mirror again, glaring at me the way you would a Shetland pony that just bit your arm

"I'll give it some thought," she concedes as we're all herded out of the dressing room. The makeup man, demanding absolute stillness, has to do her hips

CLEPT LIKE A CLIFF DIVER with vertigo, which is to say fitfully Midnight supper of black-bean soup, eggplant caviar, and cheese popcorn put dreams all over the place like a madman's handwriting. Dreamed Bruce Willis was ascending to heaven on an escalator with railings made out of Dem: Moore's arms. Behind him was Prince Charles.

Y THE SECOND DAY OF THE SHOOT, the studio has been transformed into a bricklayer's wet dream. Anywhere a decent man looked there were ladies' undergarments. Lace bodysuits and see-through leotards dangling in spider webs from wardrobe racks. Bustiers, bikim briefs, support bras, G-strings, thongs, cross-your-hearts, Lycra, and pantiespanties in all colors, shriveled like cowed stators waiting to be made complete by a set of hips as deadly as a gunslinger's

Spread out on the studio floor are scores of pinups, foldouts, old-time Esquire Varga and Petty girls, glowering strens in European coffee-table magazines, enough bare breasts to form a bed of nipples for the Colossus of Rhodes I experience an erection of the mind, light exploding in a fleeting

glimpse of clarity. This is how Hef will die, I realize, how his life wil, flash before him bombarded not by the Thing but by an infinite, glossy version of the Thing

"To me there's a difference between doing something that's geared just toward evoking a sexual response and something that is more about beauty and art," Demi tells me through the mirror again. We have the dressing room to ourselves, with the exception of Serge, calmly whipping Demi's tired hair into a vibrant mountain of curls "When I view works that I respond to, whether it's photography, paintings, or contemporary art dolls, I'm always moved by figures I find the body to be extremely sculptural The real truth is, I don't like to take my clothes off "

What?

"Then you must be a masochist."

"Not at all," she dismisses blittiely. While there is no hiding the paradox of someone who endures discomfort when removing her clothes and yet goes to great lengths to create an indelible image with them off, you have to admit, there's something about the manner in which Demi presents herself unc othed. She bent overweaning conventions of nudity and pregnancy into each other on the cover of Vanity Fair for an effect as spectacular as the Fuji blimp crashing through your living-room window As an encore, she had herself portrayed in a painted power suit that had everyone looking a little closer at the buttons.

"I like looking at the duality of male/female, and kind of playing with stereotypes. Here, poking fun at the pinup contrasts where I am professionally, particularly in light of Indecent Proposal The idea of a woman being offered, of being a part of a proposal, is very much a male perspective. Playing a sort of sex katen in the movie, then doing this exaggeration of the pinup, is a way to wink at the whole business, to show I don't take it seriously I mean, look, these aren't come-fuck-me shots."

Looking around me, I see that I'm in another realm, far, far away from the Gaelic mist shrouding the Bic man, Iron John, Mad Max. and gearboxes. The tools of ignorance have been replaced by the minutiae of artifice. Plastic crates of makeup, cold cream, eyeliner, lipstick, and other cosmetics (just what the hell is a triple asphahydroxy fruit acid complex, anyway?) are stacked in a line, enough for an airdrop to a planeload of Miss Universe contestants stranded in the Andes

"I took another look at your contract," Demi says out of the blue, setting off a metallic jangling in the machinery of my neck "It was pretty straightforward. Not too difficult."

"Nothing to initial?"

"I have it with me," she assures, with a carefree dip of her chin She shows me a volume of Alberto Vargas's plates, each one a Western blueprint of feminine physical perfection.

"He drew them with clothes that showed not just their shape but their bodies, their musculature. They were bigger than life, right at the edge between fantasy and reality, but their faces were sweet and accessible. You know what I mean?"

In other words, they were perfect, and perfection has no other choice but to behave. If the idea is to make the picture

come alive in our imaginations, Vargas did all the legwork. Beauty might be only skin deep, but a good portion of us, raised through the eyesight of our fathers, for better or worse, are hopelessly nearsighted.

"So if we do this contract," Demi wonders, as Serge seeds her hair with alligator clips, "is it five hundred bucks cash?"

"Absolutely Did you discuss it with Bruce?"

"No because by the time I got out of here, all I did was shower, crawl into bed, and go to sleep "

She tells me she has no real answer yet about the kiss, which is beginning to generate some disturbing suppositions in my own pinup-addled brain. What if, for instance, she eventually does agree? When our lips meet, will she misinterpret my oral discretion as an overall passion-related handicap and feel pity for my wife? If I engage with lips too willing to make a point, small-town lips, dizzied with porch-swing ardor wil, she pity me? Should I keep my eyes open or risk chipping my teeth?

As I'm leaving, Demi approaches in an open work shirt, bra, and p-p-p-panties. She stops in front of me, so close you

couldn't pass a cashier's check between us

"I'm still considering," she tells me, her hands clutching the work shirt together now, in a display of dramatic modesty. "We'll settle this in Los Angeles." The world can never have enough good sports

OXIOUS PERFUME of jet fuel at airport ignited memory cells containing first experience with pinup at age eight. Rickey File neighborhood paper boy and leader of Sky King Gang, had fort made of plywood and pickle-harrel slats. Inside wallpapered with naked women pinups, puckered by the glue used to stick them up. To join gang, had to go in the fort alone, kiss one of the pinups. Zeroed in on Stella Stevens pictured in a jungle somewhere Could see eyes peeking through slats. Got a few inches away from Stella's bottom, then lost nerve Ran home, ate half a jar of pickles.

T DRIVE TO THE TELLER MACHINE, the pressure of my wife's kiss lingering on my mouth. She sent me off with good wishes, despite the lateness of the hour and the knowledge of my scheme running wild in her head like a laboratory weasel, and for this I was feeling blackhearted and regretful, as cheap as neck meat. But at the teller machine I have my own weasels waiting. After five hysterical passes with the buttons I am still able to obtain only \$460. Someone withdrew \$40 during the day and it wasn't Hudson Hawk. If she spent the money on underwear, I just might die laughing. I'm still laughing when the valet takes my keys at the Ivy at the Shore

T'VE SEEN A FRESH BRAIN " Demi informs me, separating the breaded skull of a crab cake with her fork Research-Ling a role in which she plays a doctor (the deal hasn't been inked yet), she recently toured a morgue and watched an autopsy Her hair, having been streaked to match the tiger for the photo shoot, is its natural color again, black as deep water Sidestepping the larger issue, which at this point is tike ignoring an elephant standing in the corner of the room, we have been discussing the duality of brain and mind

"Brain, mind Mind, brain, I don't see how you can separate the two, really," she says, as her soup is set in front of her "But I wouldn't say that science was my strong point " When she scalds her tongue on the corn chowder, I steal a moment to form a jai alai scoop with my hand and surreptitiously exhale into my nostrals Good Lord, my breath smells like gasoline. Then I remember filling up before coming to the restaurant.

"I am a believer that our spirit and soul transcend our physical state " Demi dabs her mouth with a napkin

"It must be easter for you to fly then "

"I've been known to fly" She smiles wickedly Then she sweetly lowers the boom "But I decided that I can't go through with it. I didn't feel that the kiss was ethical." Suddenly I know the melancholy jubilation of a presidential pardon Little hands had been pushing up a mound of angst in my chest, like children building a castle at the beach. Now this gorgeous bully was stomping me with principle

"Was it the money?"

"Um I can't say there was a single thing about it that was ethical," she speaks in a gathering laugh. "I contemplated giving the money to charity, but ultimately, I realized that if I did it, I would be doing it just for you. And I didn't really want the money And I just felt like, well, I'm better than that "

"Well, that's good Then you feel good about yourself"

"Adadaduwu!" She is laughing hard now and growling as if she'd been caught bluffing in a Hearts blitz "Don't you fuckin' patronize mel 'So you feel good about yourse.f' Listen to you' Damn right!"

We finish dinner in a long exhalation of released tension, talking school, pinups, and Vargas, she showing me snapshots

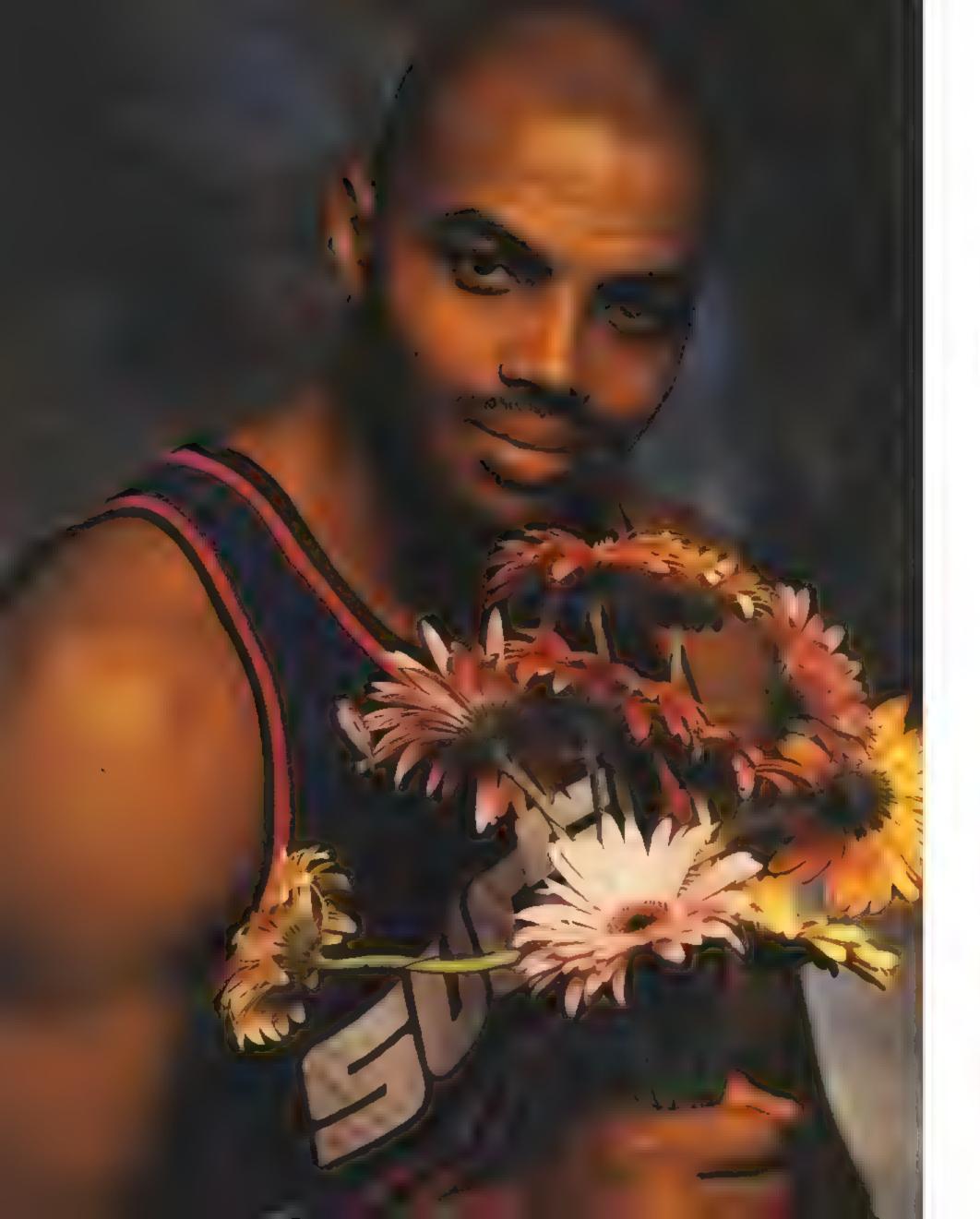
from the shoot

"The ager's age was twenty-three, not me" she corrects my joke "You're not talking about me. Although I could be twenty-three if I wanted "

"Yes, you have the ultimate control-even of the aging

"If I had that, I'd be nch " Demi chuckles, sliding away from the table. But the truth is she could be twenty-three (and she is rich). She can change her shape, her hair, her eyes, the line of her back, the lay of her stomach, with the wave of a check and a few afternoons on a Butt Blaster, while the rest of man's kind slaps its forehead in astonishment, knocking off its top hat After three days with Demi, I felt as if I had gone round and round in a revolving door made of goose down it felt good, but I couldn't put my finger on it, couldn't get a handle. Perhaps it was with the kiss, she sensed (not without some justification) that I was out to detonate a myth, crash the club where image is everything. In an age of Look but Don't Touch, I was an old timer looking for someone to waltz with,

the wrong kind of dance. So she denied me the kiss but not the asking, and in the asking I was alive, terrified, my senses popping straight as needles on an instrument panel with the twist of a key Made whole by a ritual of sweat and suspense, like I used to be before a wrestling match in high school, the pressure on my ears like steel doors keeping my nerve from spilling out on the mat. The match, alas, s never as exciting. Never the Thing, but the version of the Thing And besides, you can buy an awful lot of girlie magazines with \$460 in



## The Trash-Talking, Butt-Kicking, Ball-Hogging, Love-Song Triumph of the Bad

## 

In a loud and transcendent season, Charles Barkley has taken basketball to a new level, where it's great to be good but even better to be bad By Mark Jacobson

HE LOUDSPEAKER sounded the alarm to nearly twenty thousand mside Madison Square Garden Stay in your seats! Do not whatever you do, attempt to exit by the passage behind the visiting club bench. The Bad Chuck was loose down there! The episode had started mundanely enough. Barkley, in his evereffusive way, putting up a deeply questionable three-pointer with the game clock winding down, missing, then claiming he'd been hacked. The referee disagreed, as he had on the sixteen previous shots Charles had missed and complained about. But it was the official's comment—to the effect that Charles's continued protest would "cost him money"—that activated the Bad Chuck You do not threaten the Bad Chuck, with fines or anything else. He straddled the scorer's table, his size sixteens. catching a cable and blowing out the arena's computer system Then, his eternal malediction ("you can't control me with money") echoing in the Garden's corridors, the Bad Chuck chased the frightened ref toward the dressing rooms. If it weren't for almost crashing into a line of security guards and three Knick cheerleaders, why, there's no telling what might have happened. All this on Martin Luther King Day, too

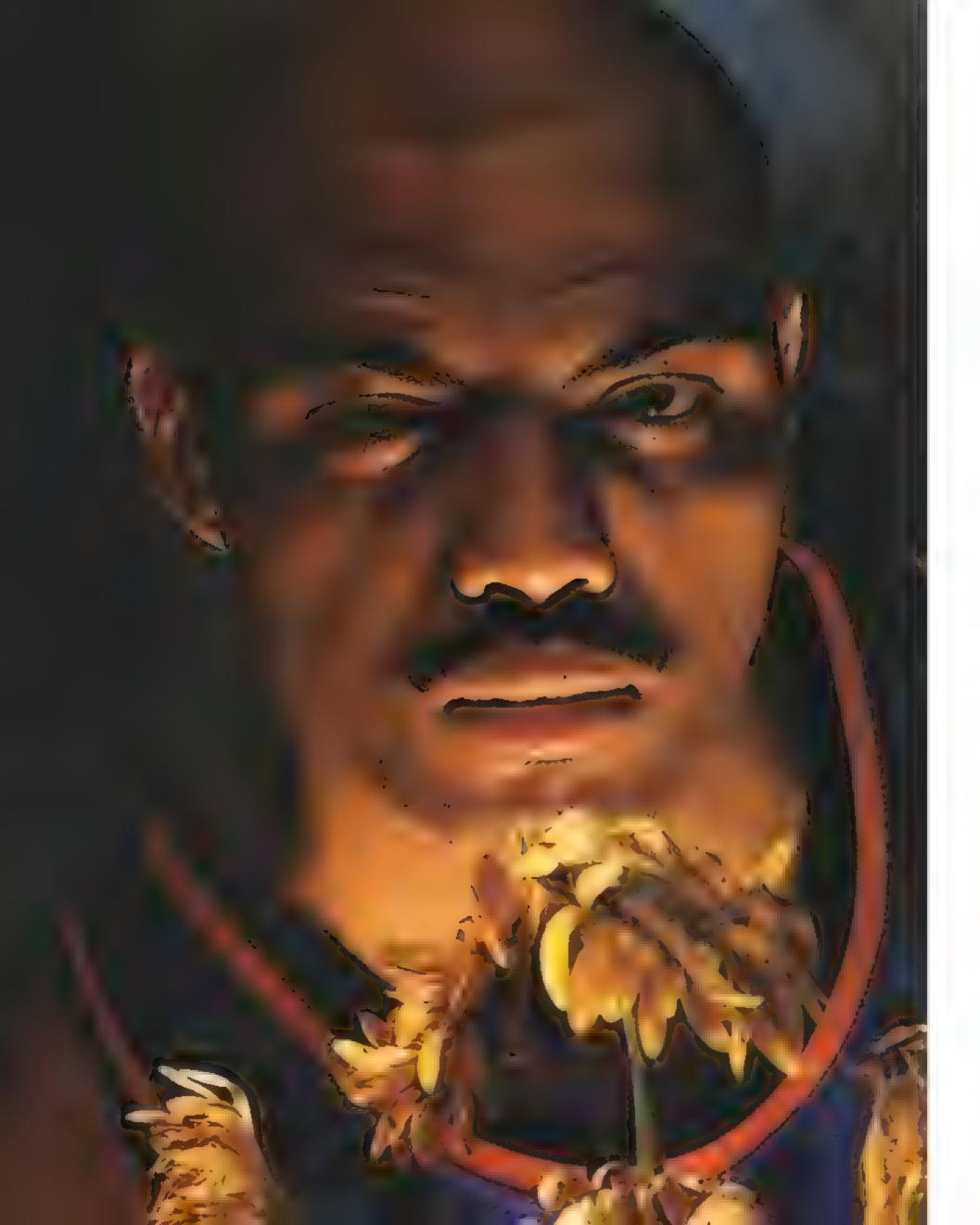
Of course, the incident did wind up costing Charles money, nearly \$40,000. But what's that, considering the Chuckster is already the all-time NBA leader in fines assessed, topping out at more than \$100,000 in the past two years alone? Charles, who figures he makes "three or four mil a year" (including endorsements), shrugs off whatever the

league office comes up with as easily as he would a low-post defender Besides, even if he is the richest millionaire-son hailing from Leeds, Alabama, when it really comes down to it, Charles-infinitely more tlamboyant with his emotions than with his material self-presentation (he is rarely seen wearing anything but stonewashed jeans and warm-up suits)-doesn't care "all that much" about money. No, the news of the Martin Luther King Day duke-out was that the Bad Chuck was back

Beware, the Bad Chuck! He approaches as a light-eclipsing Zoroastrian darkness that compels Charles to punch opposing players, to break the noses of moron body builders outside Milwaukee barrooms, to make wagers with opposing players over the outcome of foul shots, to lambaste sportswriters, mouth off about his employer's incompetence, and, most damnably, be a ball hog. It is a malign yet mysterious presence, this Bad Chuck, manifesting as it does with a seemingly free hand, beyond the control of its Round Mound of Rebound host organism. But how else, then, to explain Barkley's assertion that he was misquoted in his own autobiography? Someone-or thing-told that reporter those termble things about Armon Gilliam and Manute Bol. How else, indeed, might we account for the unfortunate incident two years ago at the Meadowlands, when Charles, a devoted father and noted lover of children, found himself watching in shocked dismay as the saliva with which he'd intended to splat a particularly toxic Jersey heckler instead wound up hitting an eight-yearold girl? These were the nefamous workings of the Bad Chuck.

Things had been going so smoothly, too. Since his "liberation" trade from the Philadelphia 26ers to the Suns of Phoenix last year, Charles has been a relative model of deco-

America's sweetheart. If he can't win you over with charm



## "I'm an emotional man," Barkley says. "I can't open my eyes when I make love."

rum Sure, there were the occasional fines and ejections, but these were seen as exactly the Barkleyesque Tabasco so desperately needed by the newly resurgent Phoenixes, formerly known as one of those pretty-boy Western Conference teams plying the elegant passing lanes but lacking the ripe and bursty cojones requisite at crunch and/or choke time. All of which had led to a ground swell of talk about Charles's supposed maturation out in the desert, how now that he was with a team capable of getting him "the ring," he'd jettisoned that nasty old Bad Chuck baggage and at long last assumed the mantle of True Supersiar, i.e., the Good Chuck

ingly, in the Barkley moment. It is difficult to escape the crook of his hish-eyebrowed visage on sports magazines or to turn on The Arsenio Hall Show without hearing how much Charles hates USA Today bilemeister Pete Vecsey or how he never eats vegetables because when he was growing up his mom and granny were too poor to have vegetables so they are meat in-

stead In fact, it seems that the self-proclaimed Ninth Wonder of the World, the Mack Daddy of Hoop, has grown too

massive for a mere basketball court.

Just the other day he took on Death. And let me hip you, Death wasn't shit. It was during one of those Nike commercia.s-which have replaced Hall of Fames and MVPs as the true imprimatur of athletic excellence in this day and agewhen Charles facialed the shroud-headed scythe wielder down low, vanguished the Reaper like he was just Bill Laimbeer Did it in Italian, too ("Finito, Guido"), since this was a cartoonish opera shot on a Warner sound stage with a hundred miney extras draped like Louis XIV Still, the setting made sense, for if the opera stage lives on solely to showcase the most outsize of heroes, warmors, and lovers impossibly enswirled by the grand gris-gris of the human spirit, then move over Pavarotti, Chucky Boy be in town He's got the chest for it, no be For Charles, the hardest (and funniest) part had to be sitting in his trailer, eating pancakes in his purple warm-up suit, trying to wrap his mouth around his pseudo-Puccini lines "Opera is like love" his coach the tenor, exhorted "Open your eyes when you sing!" CB couldn't get with that "I'm an emotional man," he replied "I can't open my eyes when I make love."

Barkley versus the Ineffable—isolated, one-on-one, hard to argue with the marquee of the matchup. After all, the Chuckster has already hurled his battle-hewn 252 pounds at Godzilla in the service of Nike, righteously branding a blazing CB onto that King Zard's coldblooded butt. Who's next? The entire WWF, a mixed team of Klannish Invisible Wizards and Metallica? Who said black athletes aren't making progress in the ad world? Twenty years ago all Muhammad Ali, a real salesman, got to vanguish was roaches.

he'll earn your love with a tender elbou to the neck.

Of course Barkley, who without a trace of false modesty ("it's only the truth") says the difference between him and the normal great player is "night and day," will tell you this adulation is overdue "Fourteen thousand points, seven thousand rebounds in eight years," he says "It adds up Never been anyone like me, never will be "This seems to be a matter of consensus "With his body construction, quickness, and overall skill level, Charles is probably the most unique player I've seen," says Jerry West, former fabulous Mountaineer/Laker, of Charles's squarish assault, coupled as it is with the most Jack Robinson-est of first steps and moves old fight managers used to call cute

Beyond this, there is the Barkley innovation factor. When you're talking all-timeness, the ability to recast the very notion of your function on the court in the manner Magic Johnson did the point-guard position—is crucial. "Charles more or less eliminated the outlet pass," says Barkley's teammate Danny Ainge. "He pulls the ball off the glass and dribbles down the

court faster than most people can run."

It's this singular hell-bentness that informs Barkley's claim to distinction. None of the dreary sport-speak buzzology-"intensity," "character," "heart," et cetera approximates the impertment resolution, the cosmic vendetta, Charles brings to his art. I mean, when you watch Charles play ball, he is there, man You get the sense that he takes personally every missed shot, every rebound that somehow eludes his famous hands. He holds grudges, too. And perhaps it is because of this unshakable thereness that the bentbrained, funky humanist ventures a preference for CB over his only real peer Jordan This isn't to say that Michael Jordan isn't the ultimate kill-to-win competitor or that you choose up sides and pick anyone else but him first, but there's remoteness in MI's well-nigh perfection, a glacial inaccessibility, a McLuhanist ice Charles is hot, baby Hot, npe, and fun Compared with His Airness's Apollonian antigravity, Charles is on the earth, with roots to the core, and he's loud and messy about it, too. We Barkley fans treasure this streetness. We accept CB as he is, man among men, one of us In fact, we won't take him without the Bad Chuck

"That's just a bunch of shit," Charles says, half submerging his famous head (shaved "not for the Marvin Hagler thing but for the baldness thing") into the roiling waters of the therapy pool inside the Suns' brand-new, \$89 million America West Arena. In this position of repose, looking as peaceful as a hydro, high-tech Buddha, the current Sir C admits that he does "go off" at times but rejects the proposal that the interior tension between the Good and Bad Chucks has imparted an indefinable extra edge to the general genius of his game. "Key to me?" he says, shaking his massive head with disdain. "What a bunch of shit.

Actually, when we talk about Barkley we're talking about a man whose inner serenty approaches that of Buddhist philospher Milarepa himself. "There ain't no inner conflict in me. None at all Because I always knew who I was and nothing was going to stand in the way of that." And indeed, to hear Charles, who at age [continued on page 136]



#### AIDES JOKED THAT CLINTON'S SLOGAN

#### HAD BECOME "DON'T STOP SPEAKING UNTIL TOMORROW."

Stephanopoulos himself, fresh from the Oval Office, where Bill Clinton had just delivered his first formal television address to the nation. Giving the daily briefings in the White House pressroom, George is stiff and reserved, so parsimonious with color and guip that reporters joke that he is "the least-quoted man in America" But here he could relax without rationing his magnetic smile and give way to a small sense of awe that he was now the Sorensen or the Schlesinger of his generation

For twenty minutes George stood in the center of the room trying to explain how Bill Clinton transforms his private ideas into public words. His most persistent questioner was, oddly enough, Buchanan, a man who fancies himself Clinton's 1996 opponent But Buchanan put aside posturing and became just another retired Nixon wordsmith, fascinated with how the new guys practiced the craft he loved

Did Chnton, like Nixon, assign a speech to just one writer? No, the President preferred to work with a team

Did he wait for a draft before he weighed in with comments? Just the opposite. Clinton would meet with the speech writers and free-associate his thoughts, the President was so concerned that his words not be lost that the speech-writing team carried a tape recorder to catch every precious syllable.

Then came a question that only a speech writer would ask. Precisely when did Clinton start rehearsing his 0.00 television speech on the TelePrompTer?

George paused, weighing the effect of true candor, and then blurted out the truth. "We didn't get it into the Tele-PrompTer until 8 50," he confessed, "and the President just gave it a quick run-through " A collective intake of breath from the room, and then wild, inside-joke laughter. George may as well have revealed that the President was naked from the waist down as he spoke to the nation. Clinton is still at a stage where he believes that he is immune to the natural laws that govern human behavior, so that a speech he reads in the TelePrompTer for the first time five minutes before delivery will miraculously be polished and persuasive. No one cuts

watching with ill concealed envy as deadlines that close, not on national Barry Bonds hit one out Safire's sur-television As Peggy Noonan said, "If prise guest that evening was George anyone ever dared try that with Reagan or Bush, Dick Darman would have cut and by the time the candidate's plane a their heart into little pieces"

> But as much as that TelePrompTer anecdote embedded itself into the minds of ex-speech writers like Noonan, Safire, and me, little did we realize that two days later Clinton would again come in on a wing and a prayer by adlibbing his way through the State of the Union message The impromptu riffs grew so long that aides joked that the President's new slogan had become "Don't stop speaking until tomorrow" Sound bites aside, this has become the shaping metaphor for the Clinton administration, America's first experiment with government as high-wire act

> OW, BILL CLINTON, AS President, has not yet fully come into focus I am not talking about waiting until 2020 for some scholar, currently eating paste in kindergarten, to win the Pulitzer Prize for a path breaking biography entitled Clinton in Power Wizard or Weather Vane? Rather, it is a question of testing preelection impressions of Clinton-revising theories of his needs, nature, and neurosesagainst his actual behavior in the White House During the campaign, I thought I had things straight Candidate Clinton was charmingly indecisive, willing to tolerate disorder and chaos, a man who would much rather talk all night than make a single decision. Hillary, in contrast, was the house disciplinarian, the person who constantly insisted, "Bill, you have to resolve this question "

> There is still a level of truth to this interpretation now that the words President Clinton no longer feel weird on the tongue-but, so far, what was unanticipated was Clinton's will to succeed, his



ability to flirt with danger and to thrive and survive on adrenaline.

I covered the Clinton campaign, tramp steamer of the skies, littered with the refuse of too many subsisting for too long on bad food and no sleep-landed in Little Rock on election morning, I had an intuitive sense of who Clinton was and what was going on in his head.

But the next day candidate Clinton

became ensnared in the bubble-wrap of the presidency Gone are the informal chats with reporters, unless you count photo ops during which the Andrea Mitchells of this world shout questions about Bosnia Who among us can imagme what it is like to be Bill Clinton today. surrounded by guards, gatekeepers, and groveiers, unable even to pound his pudgy thighs on real-life pavement? How odd it must be when people like Georgetown roommate and FOB (Friend of Bill) Tommy Caplan call him "Mr President." forsaking Bill as if it were that kind of four-letter word Some, like Labor Secretary Robert Reich, a Clinton buddy from their days as Rhodes scholars, find the transition difficult, and now he constantly alludes to the President as "my old friend " Even Hillary initially displayed an almost royal-family formality around the White House, always referring to her husband as "the President" before gradually reverting to "Bill"

Clinton, so unlike Bush, chafes at these restrictions, but it is painfully hard for this most garrulous of presidents to maintain even a thin veneer of normal life. An evening visit to longtime Washington friends began with the Secret Service towing legally parked cars from in front of their house. The Clinton friends, suddenly sheepish about whether to presume a lengthy stay, actually fretted about whether to ask the President to join them for a dinner of lamb chops at the kitchen table (Trust me, Clinton ate)

Sometimes Clinton can see the absurdity of his imprisonment in protocol During a noonday meeting with political advisers in the Oval Office, Clinton apologized for having to eat lunch as they talked A steward carried in the presidential meal on a tray, complete with an elaborately scalloped tomato gaily decorated with a paper parasol, normally only seen amid the fruit in

handlers roared at this affront to their populist tastes, and the President-no food snob he quickly joined in the laughter But even at his most manic moments, Clinton can still recall the pain of the early primaries. After the State of the Union address, the President celebrated in the White House solarium with the youthful veterans of the campaign Amid the merriment, Clinton suddenly mused, "Do you remember of organizing his thoughts It's his what it was like a year ago today?" The reference was to the evening before the New Hampshire primary-a dark night of drink, despair, and intimations of defeat—when the campaign's final internal poll incorrectly showed him fading fast But the President's implicit meaning was deeper an almost religious sense of wonder at how far they had all come in one cycle of the seasons.

These days small Clinton epiphames like this arrive only secondhand The interior life of the President exists far beyond the reach of the White House press pack. Desperate to rediscover the intimacy of the campaign, I signed on for West Coast (Santa Monica, San Jose, and the Boeing plant in Everett, Washington) My anything-for-an-insight labors yielded a notebook filled with frantic jottings about the crowds ("first glimpse-a ("Bill Cosby-bad seat-fourth row side-Tom Hayden-mm harrout, greenish suit-front row"), and presidential body language ("BC on stool-idly holding hand mike out from middle of lapphallic projection?") With only two rotating seats for print reporters at the back of Air Force One, those of us consigned to the press plane at one point went nineteen hours without glimpsing the presidential body White House aides were aimost as invisible, about the only inside anecdote I could muster was that press dress heels in a San Jose hotel room

HE FRUSTRATIONS of the White House beat-limited access, hyperkinetic tyranny of the spin-explain my ex speech writer's fascination with Chinton's public words and how they are put together More than any president in memory-Kennedy included-Clinton speaks for himself A White House wordsmith said proudly

blue drinks at a surfer bar The political of his maiden speech for Clinton, "It went great, he only went off text half the time." Clinton is the antithesis of the solitary president—a Kennedy, a Nixon, a Carter-brooding alone over the great decisions. This president thinks best aloud with an audience Tommy Caplan, who is always in the room during the frenzied drafting of a major address, said of Clinton, "Speeches are both a way of communicating for him and a way method of synthesizing his vision of the country and his theme As a speaker, Clinton cannot accept

the Big Lie of our era. A camera is a human being Without eye contact, Clinton is lost Taylor Branch the Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer of Martin Luther King who met Clinton during the 1972 McGovern campaign-worked on the maugural address and hovered over Clinton's shoulder as he delivered it Branch was on the dais-without invitation, credential, or chair-for one reason. He had the only paper copy of the speech that included all the final changes that Clinton had made during the drive a two-day swing with Clinton to the to the Capitol What stuck in Branch's mind was how isolated Clinton was "one hundred feet above his nearest listener You can't get any reaction from an audience like that " Almost comic were the elaborate instructions from Al Gore waving BC-blowing kisses-rock-star and speech coach Michael Sheehan for response"), celebrates in the audience. Clinton to build on the applause lines. "It was all wasted," Branch recalls "You can't play off the crowd when it takes five seconds for your words to bounce off the Washington Monument "

Contrast this gilded cage to the way Clinton played off the faces and expressions of members of Congress in his State of the Union address. The behindthe-scenes saga of the most important speech of the Clinton presidency has partly been told the marathon drafting session in the Roosevelt Room the day of the speech, the last-minute rehearsal secretary Dee Dee Myers was wearing in the White House theater, with Clinrunning shoes because she had left her ton revamping after every paragraph, the nervous beginning to the Congress before flowing into a triumph of presidential improvisation, and Clinton's late-night phone call of thanks to the harried TelePrompTer operator There news cycles, and the are missing pieces from the published accounts, most notably Hillary's toppencil role in drafting the health-care section, clarifying the economic arguments, and pressing for tough-love candor on taxes

> But the image that endures is the scene in the Roosevelt Room-the for-

mal conference table littered with chips, dip, and the remnants of lunch-as the President talked through every line in the fast-shifting speech with a floating work-group of up to ten advisers. At times Clinton would throw up his hands and shout, "Hold it, let me work this out "He would then scribble a passage on a piece of paper and read it back to the group, prefaced by a tentative "How does this sound?" As political adviser Paul Begala, who took the notes throughout the session, put it, "Sometimes I felt like the world's most overpaid stenographer. The tension was muted, insiders insist, because Clinton's mood was jaunty Still, as one adviser said after the speech, "Never has a president so saved the butts of his staff

White House aides see nothing unusual in this down-to-thewire improvisational style. "It's just Bill Clinton," goes the refrain. Some, like chief speech writer David Kusnet, return to the familiar image of the saxophone, saying of Clinton's rhetoric, "It's not rock, it's jazz, always unfolding, always reinventing uself" But it was the President himself who sounded

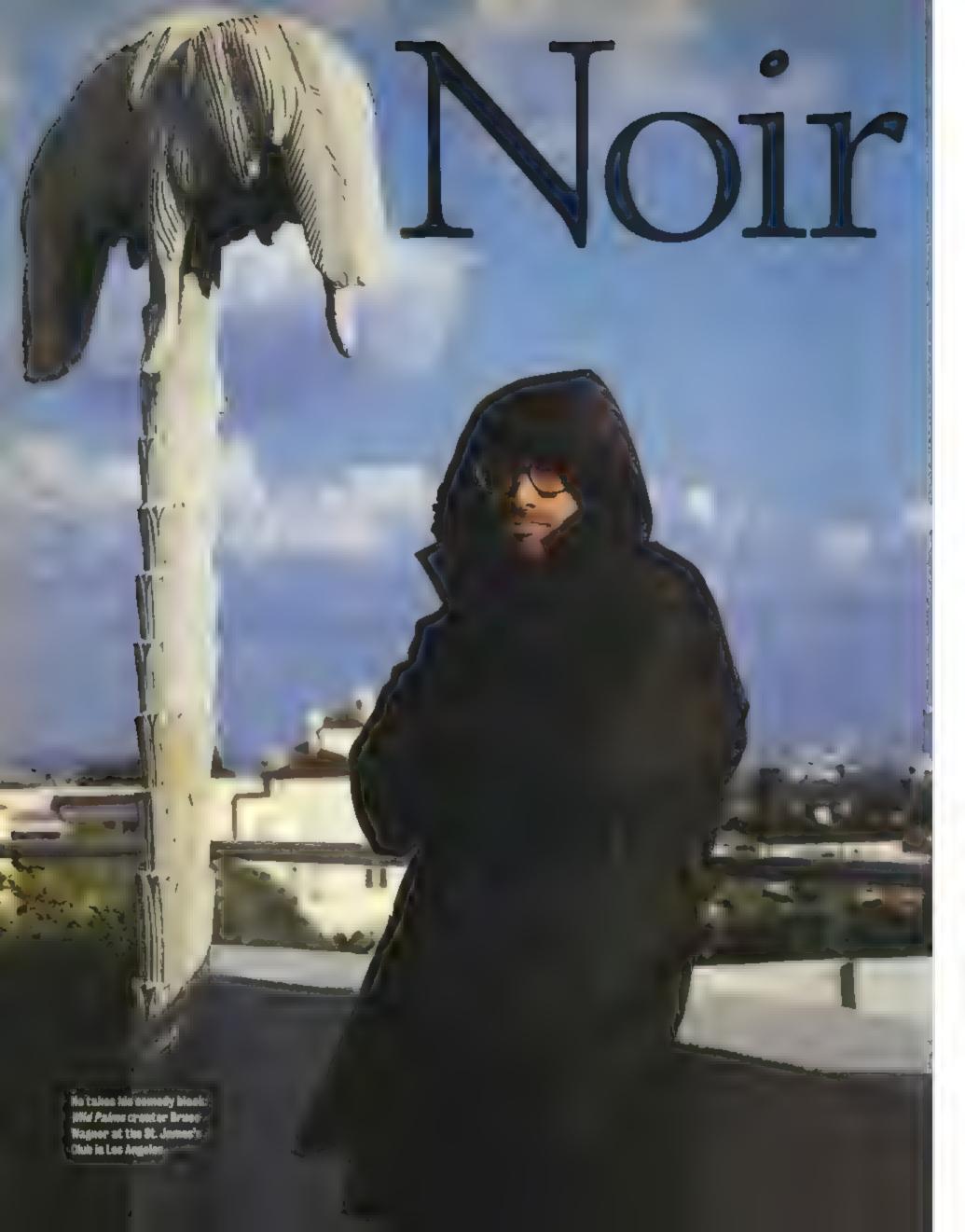
a deeper chord an embrace of a newage, look-Ma-no-hierarchies management style-in a talk to a Silicon Valley computer firm Using Al Gore as his straight man (amazing how quickly Gore gets transformed into Harry von Zell), Clinton said, "The Vice-President was making fun of me when we were getting ready for the speech I gave to the Congress. It was like making sausage. People were running in and out saying, 'Put this in Take that out.' But it worked "

Hubris is the prime occupational hazard for incoming presidents. The results can range from the Bay of Pigs to, in Chiton's case, the illusion that the all-night cram represents a mature style of governing Up to now the White House Mess has been a VIP lunchroom Now it's a management philosophy. As a veteran of the Sixties, I cling to the hope that Clinton derived his inspiration from the creative disorder of the peace movement. But I fear that its roots are with the smartest and most charming boy in the class who still believes he can pull off anything That is the seductive danger of being young and in power For even sleep-defying baby-boom presidents must ask themselves. What if they gave a crisis and my adrenaline didn't show up? 12

Our Man m

THE WHITE

HOLSE



In the Los Angeles of Bruce Wagner's Wild Palms, there are men who will steal your children, women who will gouge out your eyes, and rhinos that just won't leave you alone. Is this the end of television as we know it, or the end of the world?

EORGE ORWELL was only half right. In the future there will be a Big Brother who seeps into our dreams and makes every day a nightmare, but we will be watching him For in the Los Angeles of 2007, Big Brother is television

Such is the McLuhanesque prophecy that emerges from Bruce Wagner's fascinating new television series, Wild Palms, which premieres May 16 on ABC. Wild Palms is at once like nothing and everything that has come before it on television, a bizarre amalgam of references and influences. From literature, the show borrows from Nathanael West, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, Philip K. Dick, and William Gibson (who actually appears as himself) From film, it obviously owes a lot to noir (ABC even describes the show as "television noir") and to Hitchcock. And though the series has already been compared with Twin Peaks the two are, in fact, vastly different-Wild Palms is really much closer to The Prisoner in that it presents a dystopian future and has a limited run (six hours over four nights) In other words, Home Improvement it isn't.

The series originated two years ago when Robert Iger, then president of ABC Entertainment. was trying to figure out Who Killed Twin Peaks. He began shopping around for another eccentric property and another big-name filmmaker to redefine not only the way avant-garde television was viewed but also the way such a series could be put together He settled on Wild Falms, a comic strip in Details magazine written by screenwriter Bruce Wagner (Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills, Nightmare on Elm Street III) and illustrated by Julian Allen The network also courted Oliver Stone, who was already working on the preproduction of Wagner's first novel, Force Majeure "I said I'd be in business if I had freedom," Stone says now of the network's mitial approach. "I wouldn't do a deal without it. And I didn't want to operate like I'd heard TV operated. I'd accept the budget restrictions of doing it fast, but

besides those parameters we could pretty much do what we wanted " Considering that Stone had never produced for TV before, Iger somewhat amazingly green lighted the project.

"If Oliver's name weren't on this," says Keith Gordon, who directed two episodes, "it wouldn't have happened in a million years." Then again, if Wild Palms fails, who better to blame it on than Hollywood's favorite whipping boy?

With Stone signed on as executive producer, ABC allowed Wagner to forgo the perfunctory "bible," the detailed plot and character summary, and get directly to the writing. "That's what kept my interest," Wagner says. "Usually you have to outline it to death and you have no juice left." Instead, Wagner locked himself in Santa Monica's Shangri-la Hotel, where, dressed in his trademark black, he began reimagining his comic strip

A few dozen continental breakfasts later, Wagner had dreamed up the saga of Harry Wyckoff (played by James Belushi), a successful patent attorney who lives in a city where the people are hard boiled and children get poached. Along with his wife, Grace (Dana Delany), Harry gets caught up in a cybernetic struggle for the technology of the future—the mysterious GO chip—and encounters, among others, the messianic Senator Anton Kreutzer (Robert Loggia), who runs the equally messianic Channel 3, Paige Katz (Kim Cattrall), Harry's ex-lover, who's now the senator's disciple. Josie Ito (Angie Dickinson), Grace's mother, who employs cyberhunks and is not above a little eye gouging, and an eiusive rhinoceros, which may or may not mean anything.

In all, Wagner's Palms cycle reveals as much about where our society is heading-unlike other dystopias, this one doesn't seem so improbable—as it does about the medium itself. And as the ad for Wild Palms's holographic sitcom, Church Windows, so ominously (and playfully) reminds us. "They said the revolution wouldn't be televised. They were wrong " #





# The Accountant

IT HAD TAKEN HIM A LIFETIME OF SPREADSHEETS AND TAX SHELTERS TO BUILD HIS REPUTATION FOR INTEGRITY—AND ONE GLORIOUS INSTANT AND A PAIR OF LEGGINGS TO LOSE IT. BY ETHAN CANIN

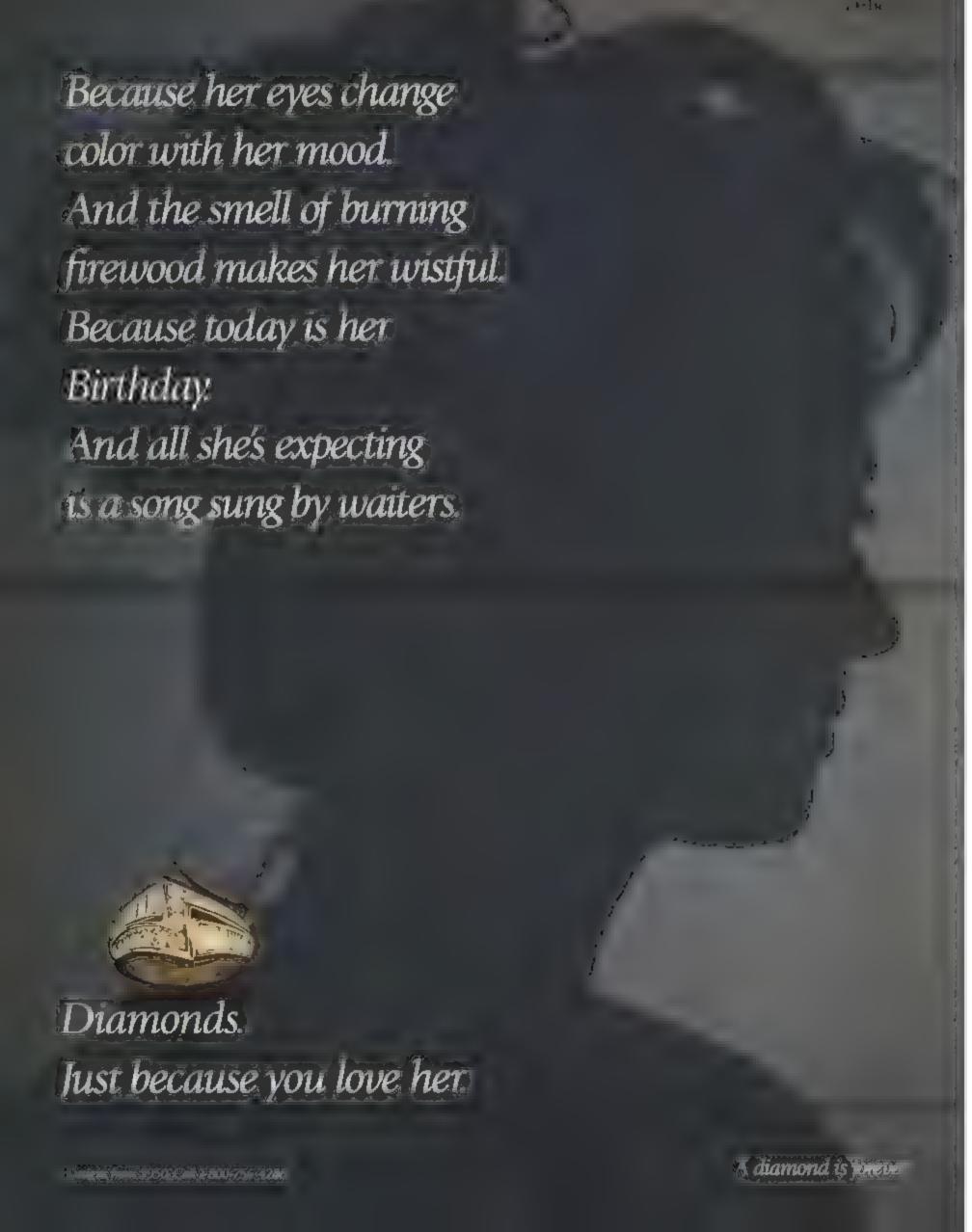
AM AN ACCOUNTANT, that calling of exactitude and scruple, and my crime was small. I have worked diligently, and I do not mind saying that in the conscientious embrace of the ledger I have done well for myself over the years, yet now I must also say that due to a flaw in my character I have allowed one small trespass against my honor. I try to forget it. Although now I do little more than try to forget it, I find myself considering and reconsidering this flaw, and then this trespass, although in truth if I am to look at them both, this flaw is so large that it cannot properly be called a flaw but my character itself, and this trespass was devious. I have a wife and three children. My name is Abba Roth.

I say this as background, that is all. I make no excuses for myself, nor have I ever. The facts are as follows. We live in San Rafael, California, and I work at Farmer, Priebe & Emond, the San Francisco firm where I have worked since the last days of the Eisenhower administration. At one time or another we have owned a Shetland pony, dug a swimming poot, leased a summer cottage at Lake Tahoe, and given generously to the Israel General Fund, although all that we still do is lease the cottage. My wife's name is Scheherazade and she will not answer to Sherri, her childhood appellation, anymore. We have two

daughters, Naomi and Rachel, and a son, whose name is Abba, after his great-grandfather, although I know this name is no longer in fashion

Recently a man I have known all my life called me at my office, and this was how this incident began. His name is Eugene Peters. We grew up together in Daly City, Cahfornia, a suburb of San Francisco that, like accounting, has become the object of some scorn by particular segments of society. A popular song has been written on the theme that all the homes in Daly City are identical, although this happens not to be correct. In re-

ality there were any number of different architectural plans used in the neighborhood where Mr Peters and I grew up, although by coincidence he and I did in fact grow up in houses that happened to be from the same one. The plans, of course, had been reflected on an axis so that each house became the mirror image of the other—each contained a living room, with the kitchen set in a side bay, two bedrooms off a short hallway, a basement downstairs, and on the garage side of the front yard a palm that in our childhoods grew from a seedling to the height of the roof. His room abutted from the



left of the upstairs hall, as mine did, in our own house, from the right, their bathroom from the right of the same hall and ours from the left, et cetera, so that it sometimes struck me as odd when the floors and walls in his house were covered with furnishings belonging to his parents and not to my own. We rode bicycles and later drove in his Buick Century, later still, we double-dated, and we played on the baseball team together I played third base and Eugene, whose father had gone to Notre Dame with the coach of our team, played shortstop I know it is commonly assumed that a shortstop has better range than a third baseman, but in this case I can attest that such was not the case. In those days, Eugene and I spent nearly all of our afternoons together after school. He had a sister, as did I, and his father was never at home, as was mine, and so in a funny way in our identical houses it might have seemed for a while that our families were interchangeable We washed his car together, we learned to ice-skate and for a time spent our afternoons in the frosty, round rink, trying to catch the skates of girls in earmiiffs who glided past us snapping their gum. We learned to roll cigarettes that burned evenly and to drink whiskey without coughing.

However, there came a time when our lives diverged After high school I was able to benefit from the discipline my father had bestowed upon us even in his general absence and go to the state university, where I began to pursue a degree in accounting At this point our separation became clear to us both Mr Peters had taken a job in an auto-parts dealership, stocking inventory at the time I was learning the indifference curves and just beginning to understand where the intersection of supply and demand could be found for an inelastic commodity, such as city water. He found new friends at the auto warehouse and I began to live my life with no friends at all. I attended school in the day, answered telephones in a hospital in the evening, and studied at night. Whenever I saw him at that time he teased me for still living at home, although he well knew why I did

To clarify It became apparent that we had diverged because he was interested in the present and I was interested in the future. I do not mind saying that accounting did not come. easily for me and I was studying strenuously. However, I did not waver from my commitment to it. In fact, I came with time to see that it contained a natural eloquence, unbent by human will, and that it was a more profound language than the common man might have assumed. Indeed, at times I felt it was capable of explaining not only outlays and receipts but much of the natural world. It was only rarely, late at night with my books of tax law and microeconomics, that I occasionally indulged the small daydream that I might leave my studies and instead become a professor of music history at a small college However, I rarely indulged this thought. Indeed, I came with time to cherish my daydream for the principal reason that it challenged and therefore reinforced my resolve to make something of myself. Sitting at the window in the library. where the septate leaves of a Japanese maple brushed the glass, I would look up from Samuelson and allow my mind to wander to the first movement of Berlioz's Requem, or to the second movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, wherein the strings, though barely moving, weep for humankind Then, deliberately, I would snap back to the Samuelson text and redouble the efforts that had brought me near, I do not mind saying, to the top of my class of accounting students

Again, I say this as background. Once a week I spent the whole night awake with my books, and I took no time away except Sunday mornings, when I ate breakfast with my family, and Saturday nights, when I allowed myself a date if I could find one or a movie if I could not. Needless to say, this regimen produced a commendable record at my graduation, which Mr. Peters attended, although he did not dress correctly.

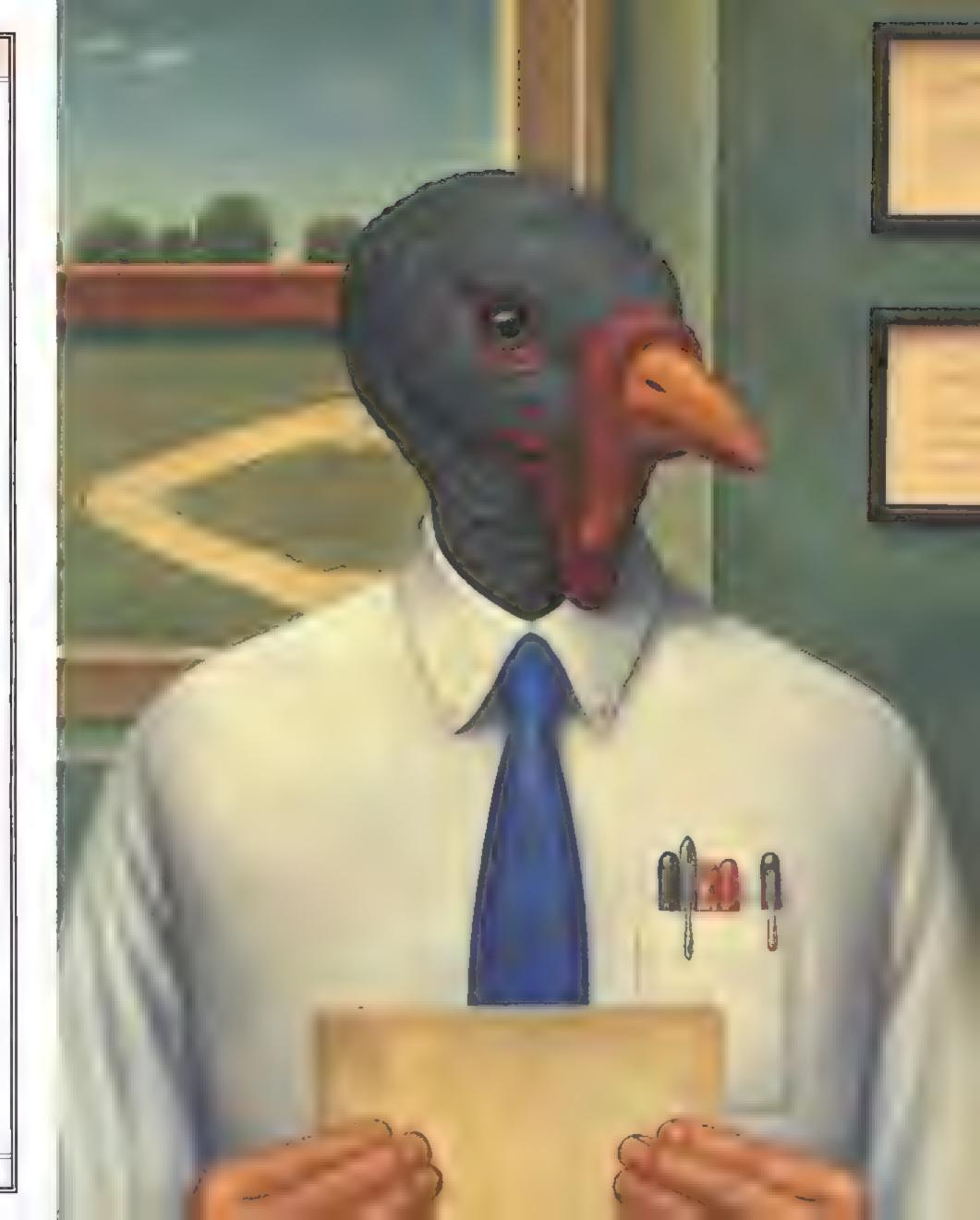
He wore a baseball cap, and I could not help noticing—and I do not mind saying this with some satisfaction—that while I was graduating with honors in business accounting, my friend seemed to want nothing more than to stock gaskets and price piston rings until the short hair at his temples turned gray

However, shortly after I graduated and took a job with Farmer, Priebe & Emond, Mr. Peters approached me and asked for a \$1,000 investment in a concern he claimed to be starting that was going to manufacture magnetic oil plugs. At the time he approached me, we hadn't spoken since my commencement exercises. He came to my office, again in a base-ball cap. The idea was simple, he said. The magnetic plug would collect the flecks of engine metal that ordinarily circulated in the dirty oil and caused abrasion damage to the pistons and cylinders. Engine life would therefore be extended.

I was unsure whether any of the managing partners had seen him enter my office in a billed cap, and it goes without saying that I felt some discomfort at having him there. I was still new at the firm. To be frank, the idea seemed like a good one, but since I had just spent four years in school all day, at work all evening, and at my desk half the night while he was idling his days at a warehouse and his evenings at bars, I asked him instead whether he had ever considered the flexibility of consumer demand for his product. I asked him this instead of giving him the money. He left our offices still trying to give the pitiful impression that he had understood my question, and I went back to my job, where in six months I had made my first advancement.

However, the fact is that three years later his company employed twelve men, was doing \$2.3 million in gross sales, and was rumored to be considering a public offering. Mr Peters had been profiled in the business section of the newspaper, and in that photograph he wore the same baseball cap he had worn at my commencement and in my office. Indeed, the cap seemed to have become a sort of symbol for him, although I do not know of what The magnetic oil plugs had been picked up by at least two major auto-parts chains and I saw them for sale everywhere I went. I changed the supermarket where I shopped because one day I found the oil plugs for sale there My friend's company had also begun manufacturing an auto emergency kit that sold well to women and accounted for a good deal of his profits. He was diversifying. Though we didn't speak anymore, I saw him driving a blue Chrysler New Yorker and heard through our old friends that he had bought a sucteen-room house in Hillsborough and a villa at Lake Tahoe with boat bays. By now several of our high school classmates worked for him

I myself was not making a bad salary at the time. In fact, I was doing quite well, and I do not mind saying that if not for the success of my friend I would have considered myself perfectly fortunate in my business advancement. Mr Emond, the elder partner at my firm, had taken an interest in me, and by working late and servicing extra accounts I had elicited a promise from him that I would be made partner within five years.



T THIS POINT, I decided to marry At the ume I was seeing two girls, LeAnne and Scheherazade. LeAnne was the assistant in the office of my dentist, and one morning while she was placing the light-blue paper bib around my neck for a teeth cleaning, I asked her outright to have dinner with me. I fell in love with her immediately. On one of our early evenings together, at a moderately expensive Greek restaurant, a man at the next table suffered a coronary, and with out hesitation LeAnne moved aside the furniture and laid him down while she kept her hand on his pulse until the ambulance arrived That kind of level-headedness attracted me On another occasion a skirt she had purchased at a department store ripped along a seam and LeAnne took it back, where she had to speak not just with a salesclerk but with the manager of the entire operation. Though he tried to intimidate her, saying she had purchased it on sale, LeAnne persisted and gained the return of her money I don't mind saying that this kind of respect for the value of a dollar won my heart as well

At the same time, I was seeing Scheherazade. In my situation I felt that I needed some objectivity, and this was what Scheherazade became for me. As I found myself falling further in love with LeAnne, I went on more dates with Scheherazade. During the course of one evening with her we came upon the scene of an auto accident, and instead of getting out to help, as LeAnne might have done, Scheherazade pressed me to drive on and nearly fainted from the sight as we passed. I became more convinced of my love for LeAnne Furthermore, when we dined out Scheherazade ordered smoked-salmon appetizers and baked desserts that she left mostly untouched on her plate. Of course, I had enough money to pay for the whole menu had she chosen to order it, but still this represented a certain difference between her and LeAnne.

In fact, there was only one incident that made me consider Scheherazade more senously. As I did with LeAnne as well, Scheherazade and I occasionally went to the symphony At the concerts I was always proud to be seen with LeAnne, for she wore elegant though simple dresses and spoke with a level eye to whomever we met Scheherazade sometimes came in sleeveless gowns and heels that had been embedded with glitter, her lips made up in sienna-colored lipstick and her hair tossed over her head and stuck with a pearl-headed stickpin. In general I preferred going with LeAnne. As I have said, my small dream was to become a professor of music, and it was not insignificant that LeAnne always read the back notes to the program. She always knew something of the composer's life for our discussions after the concerts, whereas Scheherazade, who often appeared to be dreaming during the performance, often did not even know who had written the evening's music

One night, however, during an intermission after we had heard Berlioz's Romeo and Juliet, Scheherazade waited on the open-air balcony while I purchased soft drinks for us at the bar When I came out I found her leaning against the railing, and in the lights of the city square below I could see that she was weeping. Full streams of tears were on her cheeks. I asked her what was wrong and she only shook her head I tried to think about what might have occurred in her life. As I stood there with the two soft drinks I asked her if her moth-

er's health was still good. I asked if there had been an embarrassment at work or with one of her friends. I asked her
about her brother, who had recently moved to New York.
I asked her if she needed money. Finally, I left her alone. I
moved to the balcony rail and reviewed some pension documentation that I had been working on that morning. Suddenily it occurred to me that she was crying over the music. I am
not embarrassed to say that this touched a part of me quite
deeply, and I felt grateful to have finally understood. I myself
have never cried at anything, not at a movie or at a play or at
a concert, and I don't see why it should have pleased me that
Scheherazade had. But it did. It was a small thing, but I didn't
think LeAnne would have done it

In the spring after I was promised the partnership in my firm, I decided to ask LeAnne to marry me I placed a deposit hold on a one-and-a-half-carat diamond ring and began to plan my proposal. The days were growing longer, and often in the evenings we took walks in the pale-green hills south of San Francisco. Behind me on those paths the determined sound of her breath filled me with the sense that the future was ours. A culmination was building, and one evening in those hills I realized that such would be the place to propose. The next night we walked up a new trail and in the distance. I saw a small, level plot of ground that looked out over all of San Francisco Bay and the foothills across it to the east. I pretended to twist my ankle and prevailed on LeAnne to turn around before she saw the vista, but I decided that at this spot in two weeks time I would ask her to be my bride.

However, as soon as I made this decision I began to see her in another light. Suddenly her practical nature became a sort of shrewishness. Her steady demeanor became a source of irritation and an indication that in certain situations she might become unbending. By this point I had added to my holding deposit on the ring and was well along toward its purchase. Sometimes I looked at LeAnne and it was as if a demon had taken hold of my soul. I saw her pertiness and the unchangeable tenacity of her perceptions. I began to regard her thriftiness as penury and her practical nature as mannish. One night at a concert she remarked that ticket prices were certainly going to increase next season, and suddenly I found myself thinking back on the night Scheherazade had wept on the balcony.

Now, I have always considered myself a practical man. That is what an accountant is paid for He is not paid to encourage foundless business schemes nor to weep at public concerts. When an accountant considers a decision, he extrapolates to outcomes and weighs the assets and liabilities. However, two weeks later when I made the final payment on the ring I found myself offering it to Scheherazade and not to LeAnne, and seven months later in the ballroom at the Clift Hotel, Scheherazade and I were dancing at our wedding.

I must add that our marriage has now lasted nearly three decades, and even as our passion has subsided it has been replaced by a spring of tenderness and gratifude at which I drink now as reverently as a pilgrim. I have never said this before, however, and I do not like to say it now, but I must also add that on the day of our wedding I felt gloomy. When the rabbi signaled past the congregation for my bride to approach, my heart leaped in panic, and when he gestured to the cantor at the blessing, I felt doomed. This is a secret I have carried forth into the twenty-nine years of our life together.

#### BY ETHAN CANIN

During this time, by the way, careful conversation has divined that a similar feeling was present in the hearts of several of my fellow accountants during their own nuptials

It has not escaped my attention that perhaps Scheherazade sensed my gloom, and it was for this reason that she began spending my money like a bandit. In one year, unable to settle on a pattern for our living-room drapes, she installed three separate sets. Our living room, I should add, is largeand so are its windows. Of course, I could afford ten sets of drapes, but that is not the point

I did not mention the money to her, because it was my duty to provide and that is what I was doing In fact, I spent little for myself. This, as everyone knows, is a value instilled in childhood, and I have my own mother to thank for it. When the soles of my shoes wore through, I repaired them with vinyl glue, as my mother used to do with my father's, and when my barber began charging sophisticated rates for his haircuts, I went elsewhere. However, though I had in tended to reduce our monthly expenditures by such practices, I soon understood that I would not be able to

It was as though the more I tried to economize, the more she tried to waste. I began servicing extra accounts during my lunch hour, while at auction one day Scheherazade purchased a small etching by Goya, in front of which I found her standing when I returned home from the office. It was only a few inches tall, depicting a farmhouse and several chickens, yet she had placed it in the center of our living-room wall. Over the course of months I saw that she was capable of standing before it for a half-hour at a stretch, and I must concede that at times like this I felt no closer to understanding my wife than I would have been to a Pygmy The following year she purchased a terra-cotta figurine from the Han Dynasty, smaller than my thumb, which she set on our mantel and which now and then I found her holding in her hands, ate at night, when I ven tured downstairs for seltzer water

Nonetheless, I soon grew accustomed to our charge-account balances, and in the decade before our children were born, we reached an equilibrium in our marriage Indeed, these were the first times in which I can say that I was blissfully content. Thursday evenings at the symphony we stood outdoors on the octagonal balcony at intermission, and while Scheherazade gazed dreamily over the square. I pursued in my mind some of the tax shelters and bankruptcy manipulations that had become a standard part of my practice. Such evenings were the embodiment of happiness for me. I felt I was about to be made a partner and had again heard news to that effect from Mr. Emond. My salary was as high as I had ever hoped to earn, and with stock options I could look forward to being a reasonably wealthy man in a decade.

R PETERS, however, had in the meantime expanded his auto-parts business into four factories in three states and had opened a chain of retail outlets. Furthermore, he had for some reason seized on the idea of baseball as a theme for his advertisements, which began to appear in the newspaper I do not see what the connection is between automobile parts and our national pastime, but a smiling portrait of Eugene Peters

wearing his baseball cap began to appear in the corner of these announcements, accompanied by slogans like Doubleheader Sale or All-Star Prices

One evening, while watching the seven o'clock news, I was startled to see that he had begun purchasing television commercials also, and that he himself narrated them Again, he wore the baseball cap. Needless to add, I soon found them on my car radio as well when I drove to work in the morning, although I cannot say with certainty whether he was the narrator of these. It does not take a professional psychologist to observe that he was probably attempting to compensate for his two seasons of high school play, which were stellar neither at bat nor in the field. Within a short space of time, a number of retired professional players began making cameo appearances at the end of these ads. These were minor players, such as the backup catcher for the World Champion 1954 Giants and a utility infielder from the team of 1962, and I will not bother with their names However, I suppose it meant he was hobnobbing with these retired athletes, and I do not know why, but this thought irritated me Though I had no desire to know of his successes, I found myself reading certain items in the business pages. The \$1,000 he had once asked me for might well have been a small fortune by now, and i myself might have been hobnobbing with these players, but by a simple act of will I was able to put this from my mind

At home Scheherazade became pregnant with Naomi I will remember the day I learned I was to become a father because my wife called me at work, which she rarely did, and because when I came home that day I found that she had purchased for herself an ermine stole I do not mind saying that the sight of the ermine hanging in our closer when I went to hang my own raincoat was more than I ordinarily would have tolerated, but Scheherazade had just announced that a baby was forthcoming and I felt in no position to object. In June Naomi was born

It was about this time that Mr Peters entered our lives again. We received a letter inviting us to dinner, which I accepted, although the letter had been written by his secretary. I had Naomi's college education to plan for now and was ready to consider and yet remain prudent about any business offer he might make. Naomi's money was in government bonds. Sensing that he would be asking me for another investment, I prudently calculated what I could afford to risk on a venture such as his. I arrived at a sum that, I do not mind saying, would have pleased him.

Mr Peters and Scheherazade and I met at the Squire Restaurant in the Fairmont Hotel, where we are an elaborate dinner that included a bottle of Burgundy dating from the Second World War and a bottle of port dating from the First Although needless to say I would not have ordered these vintages myself. I nonetheless attempted to pay for them at the end of the meal Mr Peters, however, had evidently made a prior arrangement with the waiter I have gone over in my mind several times what occurred that evening I had a reasonably pleasant time and I think he did, too However, at the end of our meal Scheherazade without hesitation ordered two different desserts, eating only one of them, and partially Mr Peters did not seem to mind, and he even joked about it However, he made no business offers

N SHORT SUCCESSION Rachel and Abba were born I had not yet been made partner at the firm because the position of Mr Emond had been temporarily weakened, yet my own standing was still strong and I was earning in two months what my father used to earn in a year. I had developed a technique that was quite successful in recruiting new clients. I would take them to a meal at a nearby restaurant that had arrangements with the firm, where I would talk about professional sports or, if I could discern a leaning, the current political situation. I would not mention any business proposal until the table had been cleared. At this point, the maître d' would approach, recognize me by name, and offer us a digestif as his guest. This, as I said, was by arrangement, and though I always asked for Grand Marnier, I was brought Scotch whisky instead in a snifter, which it was my standard practice to then drain in a single draft. The whisky could be counted on in the course of seconds to bring about a temporary, garrulous ease that I exploited by leaning toward the potential client and saying in an offhand way that came easily after the cocktail, 'Say, I bet they sock you at tax time."

Every partner at the firm had such a method, in one form or another, that produced results, and over the experience of numerous years I found that my particular entreaty worked quite well with the genre of client with whom I had most contact, specifically attorneys and physicians and the not infrequent movie or television actor—members of the professions, in other words, that required a certain ease with the public Of course, I could vary my approach Meeting, as we sometimes did, with the financial staff of corporations, I would certainly not try the entreaty of being "socked at tax time". In those situations, of course, Mr Farmer or Mr Priebe or Mr Emond was present alongside, and the entreaty was a formal one, made in advance of the meeting, carefully considered against competing bids and factually represented in documents.

In summary, I was able to do well at the firm, where I earned a good salary and good bonuses and was well on my way to a partnership, although I suppose I should mention another incident that occurred several years ago. At the time, the firm still went by the name Priebe & Emond, as Paul Farmer had not yet been made a principal. One morning before most of the other accountants were at their desks and none of the secretaries had yet arrived, Mr. Priebe appeared in my doorway and asked in a low voice whether I was free to see him in his office. There, we sat in the two padded chairs next to his window, which looked out over the Bay Bridge to the north and the shipyards to the east. Noticing that I was interested in the view, he chatted for several minutes about the enormous tonnage of concrete contained within the bridge's bulwarks, then he abruptly turned to the wall and asked me if I knew anything of what had been recently occurring in the savings-and-loan industry. Being familiar with the trade journals, I replied that I knew something of what was occurring then. It is important to note that this meeting between Mr Priebe and myself occurred at least two years before the savings and loan affair became known to the public Mr Priebe then looked me in the eye and asked me what I would think of an accountant who knowingly doctored books to protect the partners in a governmentbacked savings institution. I understood that I was under

consideration for a partnership at the firm and knew immediately that this was a test of my moral principles. "I would not approve," I responded

"I didn't think you would," said Mr Priebe, nodding, and then he rose to shake my hand, signaling that our meeting was over Two days later, Mr Emond entered my office during the lunch hour and told me that he had heard what had happened and was proud of my response I myself was as well, of course, and I continued my regular duties with increasing expectation of a promotion. However, within a month it was Mr Farmer who had received the partnership.

It is fruitless for me to speculate about what had occurred, although I did notice that prior to his promotion Mr Farmer had become more secretive about his work and was now often already in the office when I arrived in the morning. That is all I will say about this matter

ITHOUT OMITTING ANYTHING of importance, I have skipped to the year when Naomi was fifteen, Rachel thirteen, and Abba nine To my astonishment the children had grown up each with a distinct personality Naomi was dark in all her features, in her hair and skin and the cast of her eyes, and dark in her character as well. In our garden she sat in the plum tree's deep shade, and at the table she are without speaking. She had found a natural kinship with my wife that at times pleased me, for Naomi was my favorite, but I must say that at other times I felt the two of them were in collusion against me. They often went shopping together and sometimes returned with several twinehandled bags that they refused to open for me, laughing dark-ly to each other while they brought them upstairs to the bedrooms. At home Naomi often sat by herself. The brooding postures she assumed and the reticence with which she expressed her affections made her occasional demonstrations of love exquisite morsels that I pined for Sometimes while I worked at my desk upstairs she would enter my study, walk up behind me, and without saying anything place a hand on each of my shoulders. If I spoke she withdrew them, so that often I did my work silently, scrutinizing the account books of physicians and attorneys while in the corner of my vision the dark fingers of my daughter lay unmoving. We hardly ever spoke. I believe she knew she was my favorite and for a reason I do not understand, this excited in her a sense of injustice. Her tastes, like my wife's, were extravagant.

Rachel on the other hand, was everything Naomi was not She had blond hair and pale, warm skin that rushed to color when she was excited, which was often Whereas Naomi at the age of thirteen had worn small pearl earnings, Rachel wore boys' sneakers and dressed in the same dungarees for a week Rachel sat in the open, sunlit portion of our yard and practiced her field hockey in our living room. When I returned from work she hugged me around the legs and begged for a ride on my feet, which I more often than not gave her, holding her by her pale arms and lifting her small sneakers across the Afghani carpet atop my oxfords, which I did not mind shining again later. On Sundays Rachel dusted the windowsills without being asked and emptied the small inlaid wastebasket in my study. I often found

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my pencils sharpened and the clips and erasers arranged in rows in my desk, and I made sure to thank Rachel whenever this occurred Rachel, I believe, knew that Naomi was my favorite, though it is odd to think that in Naomi this situation produced forlornness and brooding, while in Rachel it created only exuberance.

As for Abba, he was a son and his childhood passed without the trouble and wondering I had found with my daughters. I bought him baseball gloves and football cleats and felt certain this was enough to pass him forward through his boyhood. He had an even disposition. He spoke softly and in general took easily to the world. He had no problems with his friends or with his teachers, and he seemed to have missed his sisters' propensity to spend my money. Indeed, if it were not for Scheherazade's intervention, I believe he might never have bought a thing for himself.

As I said, this was not true for my daughters. When Naomi was sixteen, for example, she decided she wanted a horse. Her high school offered an equestrian course and against my wishes she had learned to ride. One night soon after, she brought up the idea of owning a horse, and in response I could not help snorting, much like a horse myself. My own father was a wristwatch salesman and I told Naomi that the descendants of such people did not own horses. Some of them shod horses, I said, but none owned them Naomi furrowed her dark brow. I thought the matter was ended, but several days later Scheherazade turned over in bed and mentioned that Naomi was at a brooding age and perhaps I ought to consider her request.

We bought the horse from a young man who lived in a mansion in Woodside. He wore riding breeches that looked as if they had been ordered from a men's catalogue, and when I gave him my check he asked to see my driver's license. Naomi mounted the beast, and as she sat there it stamped its hooves and flared its agate-colored nostrils. "Thank you, Daddy," she said as she turned and started around the show-ring

The animal had cost as much as an automobile, and as she paraded it around the ring, her back arched, her high boots pressed into its flanks, I quickly calculated the feed and stable costs on a per-year basis. We had it boarded in a private stable. Like Naomi, the animal turned out to have a dark temperament, and like Naomi's, this temperament was most prominent in regard to its benefactor. Naomi named him Dreamboat, which I did not like I did not believe that a horse could differentiate among human beings, whenever I approached, however, Dreamboat flared his nostrils and snorted, and whenever I spoke he stamped his hooves. The thought occurred to me that he knew who had written the check for his purchase. On the other hand, whenever Naomi or Rachel or Scheherazade spoke to him, he flicked his tail and bowed his protuberant head, and whenever they approached with oats, he blinked his eyes like a lover Abba, for his part, took after me and did not seem to notice the beast. For several months Naoms rode every day, and then she began riding a few times per week, and soon after she stopped riding altogether Dreamboat developed an infection in his leg. Antibiotics were needed, and when these failed, a veterinary surgeon. Up until that time I had thought there was no professional more expensive than a physician Dreamboat never recovered, and a year later he was taken from his agony

SHALL NOT MENTION other examples of the spendthriftery that was a disease in my house. As I have
said previously, at one time or another we have dug a
pool in our backyard, leased a condominium near the
beach at Lake Tahoe, and given to a number of my
wife's charities. All the while I had three children in
private schools and was afflicted with the standard
concerns of any father. Scheherazade had never worked and I
needed to think of her security should something happen to
me. And after private high school, of course, our children
would expect private college.

Therefore, it was with careful consideration that I reacted when, shortly over one month ago, I again had contact with Eugene Peters. I was working at my desk at Farmer, Priebe & Emond when Mrs. Polaris, my secretary, came on the speakerphone to inform me that Mr. Peters was on the line. Naturally this was a surprise, he and I not having spoken in several years, since the evening of our fruitless dinner at the Fairmont Hotel. I organized the papers I was studying, a rather complicated profit-and-loss statement from a sophisticated client, closed the volumes of Tax Code that were on my desk, replaced them in their alphabetical slots on my shelves, returned to my chair, leaned back in it, and answered the call. However, it was not Mr. Peters but Mr. Peters's secretary on the line. "Please hold for Mr. Peters," she said.

The line went quiet and I rang Mrs. Polaris again and asked her to wait on the line for Mr Peters, then I sat back again in my chair and, resting my eyes on the speaker telephone in front of me, pleasantly noted the cool breeze that was at that moment entering through my window Finally, after a pause, the telephone chimed, indicating a call transfer, and Mrs. Polaris passed Mr Peters on to me. "Eugene," I said, picking up the phone, "I'm sorry to make you wait."

"I have a proposition," he said

I do not need to explain that in the business world one proposition is often nothing more than the camouflage for another, and as I sat back in my chair, noting the details of what he proposed, a pattern took form in my mind. He had called to tell me something rather ridiculous, that he and a group of fellows had arranged to spend a week that January in Scottsdale, Arizona, at a San Francisco Giants fantasy camp. I knew about these fantasy camps from an article in The Wall Street Journal, but I asked him questions anyway, because there are times in business when one ought to act as though one is uninformed, and I was well aware that this call was business. I let him tell me that the fantasy camp was an opportunity for athletic men such as ourselves to play live baseball against some of the Gi-ants' stars of the past era, such as Tito Fuentes, Dick Dietz, and Ken Henderson The food was first-class, Mr. Peters went on. the accommodations were excellent, and business seminars were held in the evenings. One of the fellows had become otherwise engaged, Mr. Peters told me, and the long and the short of it was that a position was now open. Did I want to fill it? He mentioned the cost, close to \$4,000 for the week, and I assured him that this was not what mattered to me. I was quick to laugh at this, and told him I would call him in the afternoon after Mrs. Polaris had a moment to consult my schedule.

I hung up and sat thinking It is phrases like this "group of fellows" that one must be on the lookout for in business, for such a group of fellows can in fact turn out to be a set of industry leaders, chairmen of the board, or senators. It is not

like going to the bowling alley with a "group of guys" In fact, what had taken shape in my mind as Mr Peters and I exchanged jovial barbs about his old inability to hit the curveball and my own occasionally erratic throw to first-although, for the record, my throw is quite reliable—was that in fact he was hoping to use the opportunity at baseball camp to offer me a business proposal

I don't mind saying that I was a bit agreated at that moment I went out into the anteroom of my office and stood behind Mrs. Polaris's desk, looking out the window and reviewing the near-misses Mr. Peters and I had had in our dealings. I obviously had made the correct decision the first time he had approached me, for in those days he was an uneducated man with neither the sense nor the appearance for business, and he had not in any reasonable view made analysis of the market. That he succeeded with his venture, indeed, was luck. The second time, he had of course something of a record in the marketplace, and I will not conceal the fact that I was disposed to invest, yet something occurred in our exchange at the Fairmont Hotel that precluded an offer Although I do not know exactly what it was, I now see the possibility that it was an error to have brought along my wife. It is of no use to think like this, however

In any case, while I stood at Mrs. Polaris's window now. it seemed perfectly possible that another opportunity was at hand To wit, I suspected that Mr Peters was going to approach me at this fantasy camp with another bid for investment. I quickly reviewed in my head my own portfolio, which I had weighted toward bonds in light of the unstable stock market and toward shorter maturities in light of the uncertain future. It seemed once again, I am happy to say, that I could make him a pleasing offer

And then, of course, I suddenly understood that Mr Peters had no need for my money. I don't mind saying that I had over the years taken enough interest in his businesses to know that he was heavily capitalized, unencumbered with debt service, and clearly poised for expansion, yet it did not occur to me until that moment, standing at Mrs. Polaris's window, that he wanted me for another reason. Business, of course, is both science and intumon, and this was a moment of intuition.

Mrs. Polaris was typing, and I moved behind her Because of an architectural quirk, the view from her window runs unobstructed to San Francisco Bay, whereas my own is temporarily obstructed by the back side of a newly built hotel (Obviously the hotel is not temporary, however, I will be in another office soon ) This hotel has caused quite a stir in this city for its architectural ingenuity, although it can be safely said that any ingenuity is strictly confined to the front quarters of the building, my own view, in back, is limited to the ventilanon shafts, to the rows of rather shabby casement windows, already dripping rust stains at their corners, and to the constant flow of beer salesmen hefting their kegs, florists picking among their buckets of blooms, health inspectors in cheap suits, trash collectors with their hats on backward, and butch ers, who on Friday mornings converge on the banquet kitchen, carrying pig carcasses over their shoulders like duffel bags

"Have I neglected something, Mr Roth?" said Mrs. Polaris

"Not at all, Ina," I responded

The fact is that I prefer my own view, full as it is of the suggestive hubbub of commerce, to that of Mrs. Polaris, which is so placid and beautiful that it suggests to me the shame of failed ambition, but to contemplate a question one needs an uninterrupted vista, and that is why I stood at the window of my secretary Whitecaps were chalking the bay

"Ina," I said, "would you believe that a grown man would pay \$4,000 to spend a week with a few baseball players from his childhood?"

"Yes, I would," she said, resuming her typing.

I regarded her Mrs Polans is a matronly woman with neat white hair, plainly coiffed, who gives the distinct impression of having been betrayed. I do not know if this has been by a husband, or by her children, or by another relation I have not imagined, yet in her presence I cannot help thinking that it has been by me. It is not that she says anything, for she does not, it is merely a sense I receive from her

"To me," I said, "it's ridiculous and a foolish waste of money If you want to play baseball, go to the park and play If you want to see professional baseball players, attend a professional game. It's as ridiculous for me to want to play baseball with Willie Mays as it would be for Willie Mays to come in here to prepare his own Schedule Nines"

I had tried not to permit my voice to rise, but I am afraid it had Mrs. Polans kept typing I again had the impression that I had overacted around her, that she had in some way come to expect a rise in my voice or an unpleasant stridor in my bearing. As I have said, however, there is no basis for such a feeling on her part. In the corner of the picture window, a luxury liner had come into view, steaming for the Golden Gate, and when the whole ship had appeared, traversed Mrs Polaris's segment of window, and disappeared again behind the jamb, I walked around the desk and stood in front of her proceeded to address her in a lower voice

"Could you imagine that?" I said, chuckling. "Willie Mays coming in to prepare his own Schedule Nines?"

"No, I couldn't," she said

"Ridiculous"

Mrs Polaris rose from her desk, went to the window, and adjusted the blinds, and as she did so my thoughts turned suddenly to the fact that if I did not spend the \$4,000 on baseball for myself, then Scheherazade would spend it on Persian carpets. "However," I said, "there may be an important business

reason for me to attend the camp.

I stood in front of her, a slight smile on my lips, and although I would have preferred her to ask me what that business reason was-for I am not so successful that I cannot feel pleasure from relating my business victories to a willing ear-she did not ask me anything and in fact took her seat again and resumed typing. I went back to my own office. It was a Friday, so I looked into the alley and waited for the butcher trucks to arrive.

HAT EVENING when I arrived home, Scheherazade and Naomi were playing backgammon together in our sun-room, on an ivory board that I had never seen before. "Where did that board come from?" I inquired "And what do the elephants think?" "What does the gonlla think?" said Nao-

mi, which caused both of them to giggle darkly

"Well," I said, "you'll never guess who called me today" Naomi was wearing a radio on her belt, which I had not nonced until she reached to her ears and shifted the speakers

#### BY ETHAN CANIN

"You won't believe who called me today"

"Who?" said my wife

"You'll never guess"

Naomi threw the dice and made her move, and my wife leaned over the board

"It was Eugene Peters," I said

Scheherazade looked up I have not mentioned before that my wife is a beautiful woman who has become only more beautiful as I have known her Her bone structure is Scandinavian, and although this might imply a harshness to her features, her beauty is softened by the gentle look of her eyes, which appear always to be misted.

"He wants me to go on a vacation with him," I said

"Although I had an insight about the business reason that may be involved "

"I wouldn't go," she said

"I believe I realized why he wants me to come along."

"He's trying to humiliate you "

"He's trying to humiliate you and you don't even see it." "That's ridiculous."

"Remember what happened last time " At this point I moved back into the kitchen, where I sat down at the table and poured myself a glass of cranberry juice. I should explain what my wife was referring to She beheves that our dinner with Eugene Peters at the Fairmont Hotel was in fact a play on Mr. Peters's part intended to denigrate me in regard to our relative standings in the business world. I have pointed out that this sort of dinner is commonplace in business and can signify any number of intentions, from an entreaty to a reconnaissance to a friendly repast, and that no denigration was intended. She, however, has insisted that Eugene Peters was "pulling my chain" Needless to say I have assured Scheherazade that he was not, although I have not told her my own theory, which involves desserts.

As Scheherazade had made no move to come in from her game of backgammon, I finished my cranberry juice and went upstairs to find Rachel. She was in her bedroom, braiding her hair, and when I entered she came across and hugged me "Peanut," I said, "you'll never guess who called me today"

"Mr Peters," she answered immediately. She sat at her vanity and faced me. "I heard you out the window," she said "What did he want?"

"He wants me to go on vacation with him and I figured out why

"He doesn't want another investment. He's too well capitalized for that What he wants—" I said I folded my hands "What he wants is for our firm to take over his accounting"

T IS DIFFICULT to describe the pleasure I felt in those first few hours after we had disembarked the airplane at Phoenix and been chauffeured in by van to our accommodations at the fantasy camp Our rooms were private and luxurious, and their windows looked out over the groomed playing fields to which we would be fanning out in the morning. The hiss and rat-tat of sprinklers filled the air. Not only were we about to play the game whose dearness to my heart I clearly and immediately recalled from my childhood, but I also felt

the sudden, heady pleasure of having won the professional respect of Mr Peters. He was a wealthy and influential man, and it was obvious that he planned to ask me for my services. It is one of the pleasures of life that conscientious study and diligent labor are rewarded in the end.

Swallows darted above the dark fields. On the coffee table sat a vase of fresh flowers and on the nightstand a plate of chocolates Opening the closet door I found my uniform. It hung from a hanger within a plastic dry-cleaner's bag, and I will describe it. The piping was orange, the number was sewn both on the back and on the shoulders (mine was fiftynine, which I was not able to identify with any stars of the past), and the carefully scripted Giants emblem arced gently in the traditional manner, so that it would appear level when the uniform was donned. The black stirrup leggings buckled into the knickers, the belt was stitched into the waistband, and the pants contained the classic single pocket, at the left hip, for the hat

I donned the entire uniform immediately, a fact I am not embarrassed to admit because I know that anyone who has ever worn one will understand the sentimental reasons for doing so, although, of course, we would not be playing until the morning. Indeed, I considered taking a stroll out to the helds at that very moment, for I could smell the new mowings and suddenly felt the childhood urge to ball them in my fingers However, I assumed that the other men were looking out from their own windows as well, and I decided to stay in

I doffed my uniform and slept soundly. By daybreak the sprinklers had stopped, and from my room the fields appeared strewn with diamonds. I sat on the sill and contemplated the state of the world, as one often does in such situations. How could I have known that our economy would enter a prolonged and deep recession and that profits at our own firm, which had been robust, would undergo a correction? It stood to reason that Mr Emond, as the eldest of the principals, would again be weakened in this new footing and that my own advancement might once again be delayed. Profits at Mr Peters's firm, on the other hand, had remained stable, as his products were low-cost items such as the magnetic oil plug, which in fact reduced the necessity of future high-cost procedures, such as oil changes. The fact was, I realized, gazing over the glistening fields, that he was well positioned and that we were not I went to my briefcase and removed the documents I had brought, detailed explanations of our services and fees in regards to high-inventory, multiple-point-of-sale businesses such as Mr Peters's, including several innovations that I am proud of but cannot discuss. Of course, these had been reviewed and approved by Mr. Farmer and Mr. Priebe, whose signatures stood below mine on the penultimate page of the proposal. The entire document had been bound in the imprinted leather portfolio cover that the firm reserved for its

proposal without one of our principals alongside. Presently the groundkeepers appeared, two Mexican men in white trousers, and my thoughts returned to baseball. They raked the infield briskly, set the bases on their spikes, and then turned their attentions to a section of the right-field fence, which apparently had come loose at an earlier time. As they unscrewed this section and lifted it from its housing, I

more important clients, and I will admit that I felt a certain

pride to be carrying it. To wit, I had never made such a large

was pleasantly reminded of the old days of major-league play, when groundkeepers moved the fences in or out depending on the batting strength of the visiting team. It appeared to me that, despite advances in the state of our society, something had been lost in the ensuing years. With a start, I realized I was late for breakfast.

Returning to the task at hand, I decided after brief thought to wear my uniform to the dining area because it seemed to me that most of the other men would do so as well. Thus I donned it, shaved quickly, and went downstairs, where I found breakfast under way. Indeed, I had chosen correctly concerning the uniform, as I now gazed out on the two long tables filled with men similarly dressed. One table wore the home colors and the other the traveling.

My own uniform was home colors, and I was relieved to scan the table and see that Mr. Peters's was as well. One of the men gestured to me and I took the place next to him, which I had not realized was open. The man introduced himself as Randall Forbes, shook my hand forcefully, and menuoned that he too was a friend of Mr. Peters, who now sat across from us. An older man, who I would later discover had been the batting coach for the Cleveland Indians two decades ago, came out from the kitchen and set down in front of me a plate heaped with waffles. I noticed that most of the men were not speaking, so I gestured in a friendly way to Mr Peters and Mr Forbes, then rubbed my hands together in a pantomime of hunger and began eating my breakfast.

However, it was not long before I realized the cause for the near silence in the dining area. In fact, only one conversation was taking place, a low affair at our end of the table two seats away from me, and it was not until I had eaten one of the waffles and cut up the second that I glanced over and saw that one of those conversing was none other than Willie Mays.

How can I describe what it was like to eat a Belgian waffle with such a man sitting nearby? Of course, I had expected players like a Dick Dietz or a Tito Fuentes, but now a mere two chairs away from me sat the greatest player of his era and one of the great players of all time. Immediately my throat constricted and my mouth became dry. I believe that I finished the waffles in front of me, although I have no memory of doing so. I soon understood that they were talking about the elbow difficulties of the current agers quarterback, and I will say that this discussion was enough to make me chuckle, that Willie Mays was talking about football Of course, why should he not talk about it? Indeed, although it seemed ironic to me, none of the other men returned the small smile I made looking up from my plate

I shall take a moment to describe Mr Mays. His hair had begun to gray, and although his face had broadened-there seemed to be a sort of general thickening to his features that spoke perhaps of his recent misfortunes concerning Major League Baseball-he nonetheless moved and spoke with a yawning, feline expansiveness that suggested great strength in reserve. Although he was merely eating a waffle, I can say that his limbs moved like clockwork. That is to say, as though they were attached within him to gears that moved independently. He possessed the unmistakable aura of greatness. I beheve that all of us in one way or another were watching his small movements—the way he braced his knife against the inside of his wrist before cutting his waffle or the manner in which he gripped his orange juice at the rim of the glass-and

every one of these gestures possessed the clarity of motion one might expect in a juggler, an acrobat, or a magician Among the men, only Eugene Peters was at ease.

MMEDIATELY AFTER BREAKFAST WE took to the fields for warm-ups, which began with the group of us running two laps around the entire complex of four baseball diamonds facing one another Each had dugouts, an overhanging backstop, several rows of bleachers, and the low, curved, asymmetric fence around the outfield. One of the diamonds was surrounded by a larger fan area, fifty or sixty rows of bleachers stretching in a semicircle up to the white Arizona sky, and as we jogged past these seats it seemed to me that we could have been professional players jogging to our positions. I will admit, however, that by the time Mr. Peters and I crossed the last flag in left field and jogged toward home, our breath pounding and our feet lumbering on the grass, I was seized with the idea that I had wasted my money on a foolish dream.

The whole week's endeavor had cost \$3,400 in advance, not inclusive of bats, which we brought along ourselves. I personally had purchased three, because, although each one was "indestructible," I remembered that, depending on the humidity and temperature and the limberness of my arms, I sometimes preferred a heavier bat, or one with a more narrow taper. In the style of our current era they were anodized aluminum instead of wood, and of course they were rubberized at the handle rather than taped. Although the money was not important to me, I will note that they cost \$45 each.

Other men were gathering at the dugout. These men were financial officers, physicians, and attorneys. One stood peering out from the steps with his foot on top of the low wall the way I remembered my own heroes used to standthe Alou brothers, Mickey Mantle, Willie Mays himself-although this man probably worked in an office and would be sleeping with a heating pad tonight like the rest of us.

We threw that first day, fielded ground balls, and hit against the old man who ran the camp, a fellow named Corsetti who had pitched two seasons thirty years ago. He was older than we were. I guessed he was almost sixty, and he pitched with the old man's limited, eccentric motion on the mound. He had no leg kick. The arms came together in the glove at chest height and then the ball was on its way My first at bat, it came faster than I thought, and I swung like a man trying to catch a bird in his bare hands "Don't hurt yourself," the catcher said through his mask. The old man on the mound threw a curveball next and I fell back out of the box. I heard the catcher snort. But the next pitch I hit on a line into center field. I shall never forget the pop of the bat in my hands. However, I am not too vain to say that after my previous swing I had seen the catcher make a sign with his glove and I believe the pitch I hit might have been lobbed.

In summary, our first day was uneventful, other than the fact that it is of human interest to note how quickly one can become used to the presence of Willie Mays. The first time I tossed a ball to him in the warm-up throws my arm quaked in nervousness, but my throw was a good one and I had no reason to be embarrassed by it. Willie Mays caught it without comment and sent it on to the next player I suppose the camp needed to be concerned with injuries, and therefore on the first day we ran infield and outfield drills and each

#### BY ETHAN CANIN

man took a turn in the box, but we did not begin actual play

That night we heard a lecture on the current tax laws. In case anything of value was said I brought my briefcase with me, although I believe some of the other men might have been laughing at this fact. The lecture turned out to be of a basic nature, although the information was reasonably handled and for the most part correct. Afterward we all moved out to the clubhouse lounge, where soda pop and cookies were served and the weekend's teams were posted Mr Peters and I were on the same team, as I have noted. He was written in at shortstop and I at third base. This of course was an insult to me, but I was not bothered by it Various members of the team were introducing themselves to one another, and I did not want to appear slighted at this early juncture. It was bad enough that I was carrying a briefcase. Mr. Peters took off his baseball cap, slapped me on the back with it, and made a comment about it being like old times; of course I had to agree, although I was not sure whether he was referring to our positions in the infield or what we each held in our hands His mood was expansive, however, and after the cookies we walked back together across the fields to the hotel

We went into the lounge for a drink. Several of the menhad preceded our arrival, 30king, as we entered, about "milk and cookies" and the fact that we were "in training," yet at the same time sipping cocktails from the hotel's expensive numblers. The one thing I have admired about Mr Peters since we were children is his ease with all sorts of people, and now again I was impressed with how he moved among this group. He shook hands, told a joke here, laughed at one there. It has not eluded me that this has been a key element to his success in business, and perhaps such ease is as important in the final analysis as my own hard work has been

Shortly, I found myself without conversation, and not knowing what else to do I moved to the window with my drink, where I pretended to stare out at the fields. The room was reflected in the glass, and I used the opportunity to study Mr Peters's movements among the other players. I do not know whether the men turned to him because of his success in the marketplace or whether his success in the marketplace in fact resulted from the fact that men turned to him, but it was clear that he commanded attention. I myself have never done so. Many of those present in this lounge were successful in their own right, some hugely so, yet Mr. Peters could have spoken to any of them he wished

However, within a short space of time he left a group he was speaking with, came directly to the window, and stood next to me. "A nice view," he said

"You see some interesting things from here," I answered. He commented on the line drive I had hit earlier, and I answered by complimenting him on a double play he had turned, although in truth I thought he had been early on the pivot. We stood looking over the lighted fields, clicking the ice in our tumblers. I had been expecting a business proposal, and this was when it was made

"Look, Roth," he said, putting his arm around my shoul-der, "we're not happy with our bean counters anymore." I will admit that I had been anticipating more of a cat-

and-mouse game than this, and I must say that I was caught unawares. "Yes?" I said.

"Well, I want you to make me a proposal. I want Priebe, Emond to handle our books. Can you do it?"

I looked out the window, trying to appear pensive, although one can imagine the satisfaction I felt at being proved correct in my hypothesis. At this point, of course, I was grateful for the kind of preparatory habits that had resulted in my having access to my briefcase at this moment. I smiled broad-ly at Mr. Peters, tapped the leather case, and told him I had already prepared exactly such a proposal

He smiled at me, first humorously, then skeptically, then appreciatively "Of course, Roth," he said, chucking and shaking his head "You've always thought of everything

The fact was that indeed I always had thought of everything, because this is what an accountant is paid for, and when Mr Peters suggested that we meet on the evening of the last day of camp to discuss my proposal. I happily agreed Indeed, I was quite pleased that he wanted to discuss business before we had even returned home

LTHOUGH THE LAST DAY OF CAMP WAS

when the substance of our dealings took place, it is important to relay what occurred in our baseball games before then I do not claim to be any more than an average player, but something happened to me in the ensuing days that no doubt will not happen again and that, I admit, had not ever happened to me before. I suppose it began with my sleep in bed that second night. It was deep and slumberous, the type of sleep I had not enjoyed in many years, and when I woke for our first day of play I felt I was a young man again. Our team was nicknamed the Sluggers, and that first morning we played against the Bashers. The Bashers primarily comprised a group of radiologists from a practice in Boulder, Colorado. I do not know how a group of radiologists became so proficient at baseball, yet within two innings they had scattered base hits to every field and gathered a tally of four runs, to none for the Sluggers. Their representative from Major League Baseball was Alan Gallagher, a utility infielder I only vaguely remembered from a number of years back, and our own was one Kent Powell, whom I did not recall at all. Willie Mays, it seemed, would not be playing with us. Naturally this was a disappointment, but I will not dwell on it. Of some interest was the fact that Mr Gallagher, at his age, could contribute very little to the Bashers' effort and that Mr Powell could contribute almost nothing to our own. He played first base passably and did not hit at all. The Bashers were led instead by a Dr. Argusian, who some years ago had played baseball for the University of Texas and was now in left field. He scored runs in both the first and second innings and in the outfield caught a ball hit well over his head

Apparently our own batting order had been chosen randomly, and therefore I did not come to the plate until the third inning. By this time we already had the bearing of a losing team. Mr. Peters had struck out in the number four position, as had three others of the six men preceding me, and none of our players had reached base. Therefore it was with some trepidation that I entered the batter's box and faced Mr Corsetts to lead off the third inning As I said, however, I had slept well, and as I dug in my spikes and loosened the bat on my shoulder, I felt a limberness in my arms and an acuity in my eyes that I had not felt for years Briefly, I hit the first pitch into left-center field for a double

Although I was not brought around to score, that inning in the field I made a rather nice play at third base on a ball that had apparently been hit into the hole. Mr. Peters slapped me on the back and Kent Powell paid me a compliment from his position behind me. Furthermore, I noticed afterward that Willie Mays now sat in our dugout and that he had seen the play Needless to say, I was pleased. Two innings later, I his a nice ball into right field, and amid the general hubbub from the dugout as I made the turn at first base, I believe I heard the specific praise of Mr Mays Although between innings he chatted only with Mr Peters on our bench. I felt loose of limb and elevated of spirit and did not take notice, although it occurred to me briefly that Willie Mays and Eugene Peters had hobnobbed before

It would not be maccurate to say that my play had in spired the Sluggers Our next turn at the plate produced a run, and in the following inning two more, so that late in the game we trailed by only one run and were in every way a rejuvenated club. In the meantime, Dr. Argusian had matched my feats. In the fourth inning he had made a fine catch of a sinking line drive that ended a brief rally for us, and in the sixth he had hit a ball to the wall in left center field. It is to new heights that competition naturally lifts us, and in the seventh I myself hit a ball to the same spot. I can only say that some small change seemed to have occurred inside me. some quickening of reflex and sharpening of vision that allowed me to see the pitch as though against a background of black and hit it as though murderous. The ball caromed from my bat and did not dip until the warning track in left field, and by this time I was standing on second base breathing the bracing aroma of infield clay. The game proceeded neck and neck. Our opponents scored a run in the top of the eighth. and we answered with two in the bottom. Willie Mays seemed to be rooting for our side, and as we left the bench that inning tied with the Bashers, he slapped hands with Mr Peters and spoke general encouragement to us all

Although Willie Mays said nothing more to me specifically, I believe it is accurate and therefore not immodest to say that by the final inning the game had turned into a contest between Dr. Argusian and me. He had reached base safely four times in four appearances at the plate, and I had made the same percentage in three, he had produced a defensive gem and so had I I had noticed that in their dugout the men seemed to gather about Dr Argusian, and although the corollary did not occur in our own, it was easy enough to see why. Willie Mays sat with us through the entire last half of the game, and for all of us, I believe, this was like finding our selves in a taxicab with the king of England

Although it strains credibility to recall what happened at the end of that first contest, indeed the final inning unfolded like the glorious dream of a child. We came to the plate in the bottom of the ninth tied with the Bashers, and Eugene Peters led off Briefly, he reached base on a walk-the first given up by Mr Corsetti, he was promptly sacrificed to second base, where he remained while the number-six batter struck out swinging and I came to the plate, as luck would have it, with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning and the winning run in scoring position

I would like to report that I strode confidently to the batter's box, but what happened in fact was that I suddenly lost my nerve I tapped my cleats with the bat and noticed with dismay that all the men in our dugout, including Willie Mays.

were on their feet. Instead of giving me strength, this sapped it My stomach felt light and Mr Corsetti's first pitch broke devilishly so that I could not even bring the bat to stir from my shoulder A strike was called It was immediately followed by another, and on the mound I could see a small smile on Mr Corsetti's face. Behind me the men began to sur I commenced. inexplicably to think of the failures in my afe, which seemed to rise before my eyes in a tide of regret and misdecision, so that even as Mr. Corsetti brought his hands together in the glove, I had to step from the batter's box and catch my breath. Mr. Peters retreated in his lead at second, and I immediately thought of the differences between him and me-that he owned a large and growing business concern, that he had enjoyed his life both then and now, that he moved easily among men, et cetera. Yet I have always been a man of will. I took a breath and even in my weakened state I was able to summon a modicum of courage and take my place again in the box. Across the diamond, Mr. Peters resumed his lead. I have been honest in this portrayal and I will be honest again. Before the last pitch of that game was even thrown, I had decided that I would swing at it, and therefore I cannot say it was anything more than luck that it sprang sharply off my bat up the middle into center field for a single Mr Peters crossed the plate and we had won

The revelry was instant and boisterous, several of the players slapping me on the back, Eugene Peters hugging me across the shoulders, and Willie Mays briefly toushing my hair Afterward we broke for the showers. Standing among the jets of water, soaping ourselves with the lime-scented lotion provided in large dispensers by the management, the talk was in large measure of my feats. Of course, I enjoyed this but was not altogether comfortable, as I knew my last base hit had been a fluke. When one of the men shook up a soap dispenser as though it were a champagne bottle and said boisterously to me, "To the Most Valuable Player," I nodded garnely but took it upon myself to leave the showers as soon as possible and dress again at my locker

It was then that Willie Mays entered the room He passed by Mr Peters, who had just emerged from the tiled stalls, doffed his cap, and sat down facing me. I greeted him and went about what I was doing, which was folding my uniform and placing it into the team bag with which we had been provided at registration. Several men immediately gathered around us on the benches, and although they appeared to be occupied with combing their hair, restretching their leggings, and fastening their shoes. I knew that they were in fact istening to our conversation

Willie Mays said, "You had the eye, my friend " I thanked him

He said, "You were in the zone"

I thanked him again

Willie Mays said, "Shoot, you were "

Not certain how to respond to this kind of exchange and believing that he knew what had actually occurred at my last trip to the plate, I was eager to steer the discussion in a slightly different direction I said, "What do you make of this man's pitching?"

Willie Mays said, "Watch his wrist before he throws-he gives away the curveball "

I said, "I will "

Willie Mays said. "Shoot, you hit the ball, brother" I ventured, "Shoot, yes"

#### BY ETHAN CANIN

Wilhe Mays said, "You creamed that sucker" I said, "Say, I bet they sock you at tax time "

I do not know why I said this. The smile did not vanish from Willie Mays's face, but it did appear to freeze. At that moment another man passed us on the way from the showers, and Willie Mays held out his open palm for him to slap In doing so he had turned away from me, and I found myself in the corner of the locker room, gathering my belongings, facing Willie Mays's back yet unable to pass around him and through the door I sat down again on the bench and, conscious of the eyes of the other men upon me, unpacked my cleats and tapped out the dirt from them onto the concrete floor For several moments I worked between the cleats with my fingernalls, pretending to clean them, and when Willie Mays still had not moved or acknowledged me sitting behind him on the bench, I pretended to be occupied with straightening up the small mess I had created on the floor I leaned down and gathered up the dirt I had knocked about.

It was Mr. Peters who finally broke the silence "Jeez," he

said in the easy way that made the other men turn to him, "they may sock you, Willie, but I'd give anything to be in

your shoes, my friend '

Willie Mays laughed, and in the general agreement that followed I was able to extricate myself from the corner, finish my dressing, and go back to the rooms, where I attempted to take my bearings. I still felt a residue of embarrassment from what had happened, and sitting down at the window I noticed that my hands shook slightly I looked over the vista and attempted to calm myself. I allowed my mind to wander over the day and my eyes to rest here and there across the fieldson the left-held alley, where my drive had landed in the seventh inning, and on the newly limed foul line, where I had backhanded a sharp ground ball in the fifth. The diamonds had been watered again, and in the setting sun the raked-clay base paths glistened like rivers. Needless to say, I was grateful to Mr Peters for interceding after what I could now only think of as my "gaffe," yet I was uneasy as to what effect the incident would have on our business dealings, which were yet to take place. That evening I are alone at a steak restaurant in town

HE NEXT DAY We played the Bashers again, and although I will not go into great detail. I will indeed say that whatever preternatural strength had been visited upon me the day before returned as miraculously the following morning. Briefly at the plate I went three for five and in the field held my ground without error To be fair, Eugene Peters also gathered three base hits, although he made a throwing error in the second inning and a fielding in the third. As for Dr Argusian, he seemed to have lost whatever grace had blessed him earlier and contributed almost nothing to the Bashers' efforts. Again we came from behind to defeat our opponents, and in the clubhouse afterward general hilarity was the order

This was the end of the weekend, and that evening we ate dinner together with the comradeliness of soldiers and afterward rose at the table to make toasts. As can no doubt be imagined, I myself did not like to speak in such situations, and as one after another of the men stood to deliver good-natured barbs and heartfelt thanks, I grew increasingly uncomfortable in my seat. Finally, to my great relief, Mr Corsetti rose, went to the podium at the head of the hall, and announced that it was time for the presentation of awards. Now, I should add that it was not until this moment that I considered the possibility that I would be named Most Valuable Player for the weekend.

The awards were given in a lighthearted tone. First Alan-Gallagher rose to present the award for "rookie of the year," which went to the oldest player in the group, a former state senator in his seventies who had merely watched the two games while sitting in the dugout in his uniform. This award consisted of Alan Gallagher's own Giants hat, which he proceeded to autograph and present to the venerable old man, who had walked to the podium with a cane. Kent Powell then gave out an autographed Giants shirt for "most improved player," which went to one of the radiologists who

had been coming to the camp, apparently, for over a decade.

Then Willie Mays rose. Although he carried with him a pair of black Giants leggings, his bearing was not and could not ever be comedic. He was too great a man "Say-hey," he said at the microphone as the applause subsided. These socks are for the Most Valuable Player of the week. They were the ones I wore my last season in the majors." He looked around at us, suddenly at a loss, then glanced down at his hands as the room fell silent. I believe he was near tears.

I did not necessarily expect to win the leggings, as several other players had done well also, and I certainly do not believe in premonitions, yet as Willie Mays stood before us with his head bowed slightly and his hands fidgeting over the leggings, I suddenly understood with certainty that he was in the employ of Mr Peters. How my heart sank for a moment. Willie Mays was the greatest player of his era However, he was of the generation of players who had made their mark before the astronomical salaries of our current stars, and thus I suppose I should not have been surprised that he had to make his own living even in professional retirement. No doubt I would soon be seeing him in a television commercial for automobile parts "Seeing as he wants to be in my shoes so much," he said softly, "these leggings are for him-Mr Eugene Peters."

Several of the men looked at me, and although I was grateful for their gesture I nonetheless raised my glass and pantomimed a drink from it as Mr. Peters blushed and rose from the table. At the podium he shook hands with Willie Mays, turned to the crowd, and held up the leggings, one in each hand, like trophies. Here was a man with capital in four western states, a villa at Lake Tahoe, and an enviable position in a shrinking economy, yet he was beaming a sultan's smile because in his hands hung two tubes of limp black cloth that were grayed with age and worn thin at the stirrups. The men applauded and so did I

After the ceremony a group of us repaired to the lounge, where the talk turned first to Major League Baseball, then to politics, and finally to the economy, which I am not surprised to report was of concern to many present. A consensus was reached concerning downsizing and cost trimming to weather the current crisis, and another round of drinks was ordered by Mr Peters. At this point Mr Forbes left for a few minutes, and I could see him down the hall talking to the concierge and then speaking on the desk telephone. He returned, joined the conversation, and a few minutes later the door to the lounge opened and three young women entered

Mr Forbes greeted them and waved them to our table, where he provided them with chairs and signaled to the bar-

tender for an order. I rose to be introduced. I am a man with children and it was not until I was standing that I understood what was taking place. From my position above the table I saw that one of them was sitting quite close to Mr. Peters on the red leather bench and was in fact touching him. I wondered briefly whether this kind of behavior was the quid pro quo for the untrammeled success that Eugene Peters had enjoyed, and though I admit that at that moment I felt a bolt of envy, I also understood that without children Eugene Peters would vanish completely from this earth. I excused myself and went outside to the telephone, where I called Scheherazade

I told her that I missed her, then followed this with a phrase we often used in the early days of our marriage.

"Oh, Abba," she said.

Next I spoke to Naomi, who greeted me suspiciously but then told me about a young man who had taken her to the movies and about a party dress she had recently purchased, Abba came on the line and we spoke about baseball in general terms and our plans to see the Giants at home when I returned, Rachel spoke last and said she missed me. She was eager to hear of my time at camp and quizzed me concerning my at bats, which, needless to say. I found gratifying. We hung up and I returned to my rooms

I could not imagine what was transpiring downstairs, yet I suspected it would have bearing on our meetings tomorrow Perhaps it behooved me to join my colleagues in the sense that a feeling of fraternity is pedimental to the business relationship, perhaps, on the other hand, to stay away would confirm my reputation as a moral force, which of course was integral to the standing of an accountant. I am not unaware that it will perhaps be of disappointment to learn that I indeed stayed in my rooms that evening I took the proposal documents from my briefcase, read through them once again for accuracy, replaced them in their proper order, and changed for bed Sometime after night had descended to its full blackness

and the moon had risen in my window, I heard the elevator arrive and boisterous conversation issue from the hallway outside my room Eugene Peters's voice crowed unmistakably along with the softer intonations of a lady's, and I felt a bolt of distaste for the man who, though successful, spent his days hobnobbing with ballplayers and his nights cavorting with strumpets. To my horror, a knock sounded

I ignored it at first, but it sounded again and I could hear the two of them in the hallway rustling like raccoons outside a tent. I rose quickly, crossed the room in my pajamas, and opened the door feigning sleepiness. Eugene Peters stood there, well into his cups, alongside the strumpet, and I will only record the first moments of the conversation to clarify its nature.

"See, Sugar," she said, "you woke the man up"

"Just making sure you're ready for business, eh, Abbot?" "Indeed I am," I said

"Please excuse us," she said, pulling on his arm.

"Abba doesn't need to excuse us, I've known him for forty years Do you, Abba?"

"No, I don't "

"Abba and I are going to make a deal tomorrow, aren't

This sort of embarrassment continued for several minutes until the lady, who seemed to be of surprisingly good breeding, succeeded in wrenching him away from my door and steering him down the hall. I climbed back into my bed and was able to dismiss the incident quickly, although it did occur to me that Mr. Peters was a shrewd negotiator and that this might have been his attempt to establish psychological superiority Outside my window the sprinklers came on Again I rose and reviewed the documents.

N THE MORNING We had our meeting. I dressed as though for the office, that is, in a neutral suit and striped tie, on the supposition that overgrooming was superior to under, and strolled to Mr. Peters's suite. Mr Forbes, himself in a similar suit, met me at the door and ushered me into the fover, which opened onto a second bedroom with a foldout sofa and a dresser, next to which a portable meeting table had been placed. Here I took a seat. I had nonced several more closed doors adjoining the foyer and supposed these led to Mr. Perters's own bedroom and most probably another living room I noticed no evidence of the lady I had met last night Although the layout of the suste caused my own rooms to seem puny by comparison, I reflected that in general I prefer small quarters. Mr. Forbes offered me a drink from the bar and I accepted tomato juice. I complimented him on his fielding over the weekend and he nodded. He made no attempt to offer conversation, so I opened my briefcase and pretended to occupy myself with preparation

Suddenly Eugene Peters entered from a side door dressed in his bathrobe. He shook my hand, told me that he had one more urgent piece of business to attend to, inquired after my comfort, my tomato juice, et cetera, and left by the same door Mr Forbes then entered and rather glumly refilled my glass with tomato juice. He left and I continued review-

After several minutes I stood and went to the window The morning sun was shattered in prisms by the blinds, and in the distance I could see a group of men on the grass. I was surprised, I must say, when I realized that these were the new arrivals here to replace us without even a day's interlude Several of them were throwing the ball around the infield while another took swings on the pitching machine set up alongside the bullpen. The light and the long vista onto the grass reminded me of Fort Bragg, where I had spent a few months at the end of the Korean War. The man hitting on the machine missed most of the pitches or nicked foul pop-ups that flew up behind him and bounced in the rope mesh like birds struggling in a net. It occurred to me that Mr. Peters had worn his bathrobe for a strategic reason, and I doffed my jacket and set it across the dresser

At the window the man I was watching suddenly hit a string of low, powerful line drives that sped to the end of the cage and recocheted off the restraining fence. In a game they would have gone for extra bases. As suddenly as this string began, however, it ended, and he missed four pitches in a row I was watching this demonstration with some interest He stepped out of the box and tapped the dirt out of his cleats, but I could see that he was looking to see whether any of the other men had seen his string. On the field beside him they continued their throws. The man put down the bat, switched off the machine, and jogged out to the field. He took a throw from one of the other players. Then he ambled up to the man playing third base and began to chat between the

#### BY ETHAN CANIN

ground balls they were fielding. In a few moments he pointed toward the batting cage, and I moved away from the window

At this point I heard something that sounded like a burst. of giggling followed by another, lower sound, although as soon as it was over I was not sure whether it had come from the fields, from elsewhere in the hotel, or indeed if I had heard it at all. I was beginning to perspire. There was a great deal that made me uncomfortable here, although I shall not go into it. I patted my forehead with my handkerchief, went to the dresser, glanced idly in its mirror, and sat on the foldout sofa beside it. Mr Peters had been gone several minutes by now and I began to wonder whether he really had another matter to attend to or whether he merely wanted to create the impression for business reasons. Again I checked the contents of my briefcase. I stretched my legs. The drawer to his dresser was slightly open, and without thinking I reached my arm back and drew out what touched my hand, which happened to be a piece of clothing. I do not believe I knew beforehand that it was one of the leggings of Willie Mays.

Yet that is what I now held, and although I suppose I should have replaced it immediately and closed the drawer, I could not help wanting to examine it. Leaning back in the sofa, I held it in my fingers. Though of course it was quite ragged, I do not mind saying that it was beautiful. The elastic top still drew firmly when I stretched it, and the stirrup at the

bottom was of a second material-silk, I believe

Though I knew he had in effect bought these leggings, as I sat there I nonetheless began to have thoughts again about the differences between Mr Peters and me-that he hobnobbed with ballplayers, that he owned a large and growing business concern, that men of talent and ambition were in his employ. et cetera. I found it difficult to fathom that the lazy scoundrel I knew as a boy was now a captain of industry, and as I sat there with the legging in my hands I tried to remember if our childhoods contained some hint of our futures. At that moment, however, I heard him again in the hall and without thinking I opened my briefcase and dropped his legging into it.

Why did I do this? I cannot say I know I might as easily have dropped it back into the dresser or simply continued to examine it, which was of course within the bounds of behavior What troubles me is that my reaction was that of a thief caught red-handed, though of course my whole life had been spent in a profession that as a sidelight prevents exactly such behavior. I had little time to think. I closed the briefcase just as Mr Peters reentered the room, and this again served to reinforce the dreadful feeling I had that I was acting larcenously, although objectively speaking I do not believe I gave this dread away Indeed, for a fleeting second I had the bizarre thought that in another life I might indeed have made a competent thief

Mr Forbes had come in alongside The two of them shook hands with me again, and we all took places at the table, Mr. Peters across from me and Mr. Forbes beside. I set the briefcase between us-and again my own behavior surprised me, for one needs not to have read a great many crime novels to know this was exactly the sort of brazen act ubiquitous among the criminal class. It was a feat of discipline that I was able to concentrate on the matter at hand.

I had never been in negotiations with Eugene Peters and I was in fact surprised at the manner in which they began He had changed his clothing, and now it was only I who

was without a suit jacket. Nonetheless he opened by discussing everything other than what we had gathered to discuss. He talked about Willie Mays and the 49ers football team, offered voluble praise for my performance over the weekend, and at one point mentioned that perhaps it was I who had ought to have won the award. Naturally, I was pleased by this and denied vehemently that I deserved it. One can imagine my feelings

Quite suddenly Mr Peters slapped the table with both hands, opened his arms expansively, and said, "Well, Abba,

I was quite flustered for a moment until I realized that he was referring to the proposal. Without willing the act, I had at some point removed the briefcase from the table and set it on my lap, for that is where I now found it. I nodded and lifted it in front of us again. Mr Peters smiled. I moved it forward on the cherry table, placed my hands on the latches, then withdrew it to my lap again. He was still smiling, although now something quizzical had entered his expression I considered opening the case on my lap, but to the side of me stood Mr Forbes, who I realized was his henchman and would not refrain from peering into it.

I am sure that the reader would have chosen another course of action in this same circumstance, although I am equally sure the reader has not found himself in it. "I'm sorry, Eugene," I said, "but I have no proposal"

"I don't understand," said Mr Peters

"Our principals have determined that it would not be in our interest to represent your companies. We no longer wish to solicit your account "

"Pardon me. Abba?"

I hesitated to repeat what I had said, for I was in a dark woods and each moment stepping further into it. As soon as this phrase was spoken, I realized that Mr Peters might well contact our principals for explanation

Mr Forbes had stood and moved a step toward me. "Say

that again, fella," he said

"We are no longer in a position to solicit your account." "I thought you had the proposals all prepared, Abba." "Well, I do not."

T IS PAINFUL and perhaps pointless to recount the remainder of our meeting, or for me to relay how by uttering that single phrase I had destroyed a reputation that had taken me a lifetime to build. He asked me several times to clarify my position, and in each case I was forced to argue against everything I had been working toward over many years.

Of course, it would be less than truthful to claim that I did not consider confession. Indeed, while Mr. Peters formulated several rejoinders to my refusal, I considered opening my briefcase, attempting to cast the whole incident and business refusal as a practical joke, and beginning our negotiations once again Perhaps this is what I should have done and let the chips fall where they might—it is a tantalizing possibility to consider However, I did not. Our meeting escalated to threats and culminated in rancor, and in an hour I was on the airplane back to San Francisco

Naturally I made every effort to put the incident from my mind I thought of what I would say when Naomi showed me her new dress, and what I would tell Rachel

about baseball camp, and as we crossed the snowy peaks of the eastern Sierras I decided that on the way home from the airport I would purchase a small pendant that I knew Scheherazade had been considering. Over San Francisco airport we entered a holding pattern, and it was not until we had circled the southern traverse of the bay, cocking our starboard wing toward the banks of fog in the foothills, that I felt able to consider my situation again. Indeed it seemed that I had irrefutably damaged the progress of my life, all because I had agreed to something I had not even wanted to do. I cursed the day I had decided to attend the camp.

Shortly, I regained hold of myself. The airplane was crossing the northern up of the bay, and I removed the briefcase from its underseat compartment and moved it to my lap. The man next to me took no notice, and after keeping it there for one complete cycle of our holding pattern, I ven-

The legging lay across my proposal Of course it didwhere else would it have been?—although I confess that I was surprised to see it. In my mind the events of the preceding hours had taken on a dreamlike quality, and before I opened the case I actually hoped that they had somehow not really occurred. Yet there lay the legging, coiled darkly across my papers I glanced at my neighbor and brought it up into the air, where I rolled it between my hands stretched it to and fro in the light of the window, and even smelled it, although the only scent I could discern was that of commercial laundry soap.

Suddenly the thought occurred to me that the man next to me might have believed it to be a woman's stocking I glanced at him but he did not acknowledge me. I cleared my throat and said, "It's not what you think it is "

"Probably not," he answered

"It happens to be the legging worn by Willie Mays during his last season in the major leagues."

He turned to me, although I believe he may have been feigning interest "Where'd you get hold of it?"

He held out his hand to touch it, rubbed it between his fingers like a rug merchant, exaggerated a sigh of impression, then turned back to his work. I was glad to have diverted his suspicions, although I will admit that his indifference jolted me even further, for clearly in my hand lay a piece of thin black cloth for which I had recently traded my career

On the way home from the airport I bought the pendant for Scheherazade, although, as I acknowledged when I gave st to her, it was smaller than the one on which she had recently had her eye Nonetheless, when I arrived home she seemed delighted Rachel rode around the living room on my oxfords and Abba appeared at the back door with a baseball, which we proceeded to throw around in our backyard. Only Naomi had not yet appeared, and when the afternoon began to wane I went upstairs alone to unpack my things.

In the bedroom I set down my value and briefcase, put on the Toscanini recording of Berlioz's Romeo and Juliet, shined

my exfords, and proceeded to hang my shirts and pants and fold my underclothes. I stored the empty value and sat down on the bed. The string crescendo of the second movement rose to its chinax and I went to my briefcase and removed the legging. I placed it in the back of my socks drawer, then removed it and set it underneath our mattress. Presently I retrieved it and hung it on a hanger in the closer, although after a time I

took it out again from there and set it next to me on the bed. I thought of Willie Mays in the 1954 World Series, turning away from the plate and sprinting straight back to deep center to catch Vic Wertz's line drive over his shoulder. I thought of him pivoting at the warning track to make the legendary throw that held Al Rosen from advancing to second I picked up the legging and stretched it in my hands, and I thought of Eugene Peters when he opened the dresser drawer to pack Of course he would suspect me, although he would have no choice but to suspect Mr. Forbes as well, and without admission there would be no proof. I thought of Willie Mays in the eighth inning on April 30, 1961, hitting his fourth home run in a single game, and in the failing western light of the afternoon my own ambitions seemed suddenly paltry I knew, and I suppose I had known for quite some time, that I would never make principal at Farmer, Priebe & Emond. The position would no doubt go to a younger man. And although this was a disappointment to me, it was not a great one, for although it is embarrassing, I must acknowledge that within me I have always felt the impulse for uproar and disorder

This, of course, is a secret I have always kept from my fellow accountants. Indeed, at the office the thought has occurred to me, more often perhaps than I ought to say, that I could just as easily have misadded columns, jumbled figures, and transposed tabulations as performed the careful work that over the years has been my trademark. Sitting on my bedspread I was filled with a strange regret. This is what I had a beautiful and capricious wife, a brooding daughter and an exuberant one, a son cut from my own cloth, a comfortable house, and a career that had proceeded reasonably well though not exactly as I might have liked. This is what I did not have mutiny, a life of music, and a future unfounded in the past

Presently I heard steps on the stairs and I replaced the legging in my briefcase. In a moment the door opened and Naomi entered. She did not greet me but went instead to the window, where she placed herself on the sill and looked out over the yard. I walked over and stood behind her, although I could not discern her mood and was afraid to lay my hands on her shoulders or to speak

"You seem different, Daddy," she said

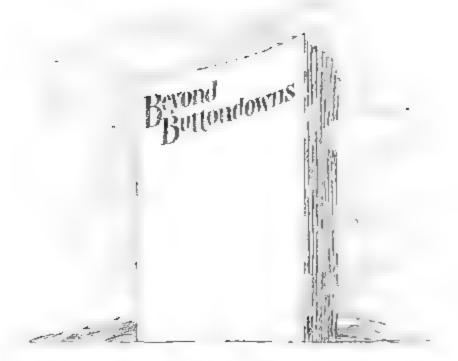
I went to my briefcase and removed the legging A strange ebullience had taken hold of me "I stole this," I said

She turned from the window and regarded me I sat again on the bed, turned the legging in my hands, and recounted the story as the sun fell lower behind her Although any man who has ever had girls might understand, others will no doubt think it sad for me to say that up until that moment I believe I had never in my life had the full attention of my daughter It had grown darker and her eyes, looking closely into my own, shone fiercely

"I'm glad you did it," she said when I had finished

I laughed

"Don't be silly," I told her Evening had descended quickly, and because in the presence of my daughter the darkness was suddenly embarrassing, I went to the desk and switched on the lamp. The bulb is a small one, and standing in its weak. light with my daughter behind me I was seized, as I sometimes am, with sadness. I suppose I was wondering, although it is strange for me to admit it, why, of all the lives that might have been mine. I have led the one I have described is



Here is a special catalog from Lands' End:

## Fine clothing for men who hate to shop, and their discerning wives.

#### We named it "Beyond Buttondowns" and here's how it came about:

All men are not created equal when it comes to their patience in shopping today's men stores, with their mix of intrusive or indifferent clerks. Nor do they all share the gift for recognizing true value, and choosing what's best suited to them.

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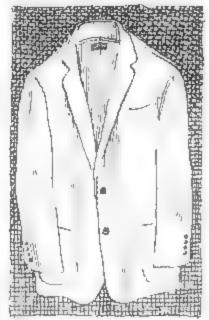
Our first issue of this new catalog has let us know you're out there-you who appreciate shopping from the comfort of your own home, either by calling our toll-free number, 1-800-356-4444. or through the mail. And who are reassured by our implacable guarantee So gracious, we can state it in two words GUARANTEED PERIOD

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linen jackets for men-the genuine Moygashess, in Black, Natural, Green, Maize, Indigo, and Eggplant World class at any price. At our prices, incomparable1



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#### Send to: Lands Fud Direct Merchants Dept #TV I Lands' End Lane, Dodgeville, WI 53595





left pupil huge, the right one pinned, as if half of him just nozzled a busload of coke and the other side slammed smack. It's the rest of David Bowie—the glistening wire rims, the starched white shirt, knife-creased flannel slacks, and sensible lace-up shoes—that's so normal it's—shocking.

### Even Bowie's chosen modes of self-destruction packed

"So much of the image thing—the Thin White Duke and all the rest—was a way of hiding from myself," he says of the had old days and nights of Ziggy Stardust et al. "I felt that if I created this kind of doppelgänger that took on all my faults and guilts and paranoias, then one day I'd be able to destroy it I would be able to run away from it all. Then I would be free

"I was consciously trying to create two mes out there. Unfortunately, what I was doing was drawing myself into this creation of me. I was ignoring the reality of my self, my feelings and emotions. At that point, you're in an abyss. You are no longer part of humanity. You have taken yourself out of the spirit of life, and it is soul-crushing—if you have any soul left. It's probably like looking into the face of Satan. It's just cold and numb and scary as hell."

But enough on the joys of fame and money! All this heavy chatter renders even the clean-and-soberest superstar a tad squirrelly. Bowie has tucked one knee up on the floral hot seat. Now he stops hugging his leg long enough to reach for a cigarette from a provincial end table. There are two packs, Marlboro Reds and Marlboro Lights. He pauses, one argyled ankle slipped discreetly beneath his slender ass, and selects a Light.

He looks, at this moment, if not exactly like the Marlboro Man, then at least like the Marlboro Light Man Masculine yet slightly fey Impassioned but understated A sort of Zen dandy

So now we're lit up. Ready for more rough stuff, the torrent beneath the elegant facade. Bowie blows out smoke, waves it away—even his cough is stylish—and returns his gaze to some interior horizon.

"Mental illness was a huge factor in my family background. I had a stepbrother who committed suicide in 1986. There were actually three suicides in my family. And many of them were mentally disturbed. A number of my mother's sisters were hospitalized because of it.

"So I used to wonder about my eccentricities, my wanting to explore and put my-self in dangerous situations, psychically. I was scared stiff that I was mad, that the rea-

son I was getting away with it was that I was an artist, so people never knew I was totally bonkers. And the whole time I'm thinking, Why am I doing this to myself?"

He speaks, even of the abyss, with alarming charm, the suspicion that even this may be the warbling of a chic doppelganger can't help but flicker forth. The pale-blue eye

a certain glamour, incidents like the

seems sincere enough But that dark right one "So much of what seems to be important in rock is that you give your life for the work And the audience, by some means, wants to watch somebody destroy himself."

Even his chosen modes of self-destruction packed a certain glamour. While hardly immune to your bread-and-butter OD—"my body had gone cold, I was unable to breathe, my heart felt like it was palpitating a thousand times a second"—what lingers are episodes like, say, the romantic suicidein-Berlin saga.

"I had a row with somebody, and I took my car out and drove it round and round a hotel car park, going faster and faster, hoping that I would hit a pillar and that it would be all over As I was getting up to forty and fifty, going around the corners, I remember looking at the dash, thinking, Jesus! Aren't I going to crash soon! One remembers James Dean and all of those. So all that perfume was percolating around. Well, the auto crash is the way to go, but I'll put a twist on it—I'll just crash into a pillar in this underground car park in Berlin."

Happiny, it's a brand-new David. (It's practically a Dave.) Two years off the petrochemicals, he's not just happy—he's happily married to the gorgeous Somalian model Iman (Let's hope his judgment in this area has improved.) And he's got a new album, sans Tin Machine, titled Black Tie White Noise, to celebrate the coupling. Far from the depths of Low—which actually used the Berlin incident for its best tune, "I'm Always Crashing in the Same Car". Black Tie derives its mood from the heights of nuptial bliss. "The flow realty came from writing the wedding music. I mean, I never thought I'd be doing that. This is the first time I've ever been absolutely

This is the first time I've ever been absolutely smitten. Every time she's on the phone, or I see her, it's like 'Wow! This is great! I can't believe she really likes me!'."

Golly! I can't believe it, but I believe him. It's hard to imagine the Man Who Fell to Earth landing in Hallmarkville, but who knows? Bowie's always been in the forefront So maybe he's strung out on the drug we'll all be doing next—and it just happens to taste like saccharine.





## "King George IV was up here, back in 1822.

He would drink nothing but The Glenlivet:"

- Sandy Mune, our Resident Sage

**1** Its Ma esty was gracing Scotland with a state visit at

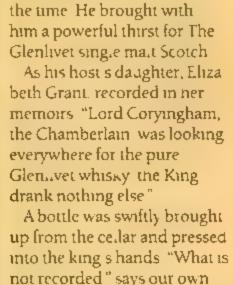


Sandy Milne and trusty companion, Ambrose



What is a single malt Scotch?

A single malt is Scotch the way it was originally one single whisky from one single distillery. Not, like most Scotch today a blend of many whiskies. The Glentwet single malt Scotch whishy should therefore be compared to a chatcau bottled wine. Blended Scotch is more like a mixture of wines from different vineyards.

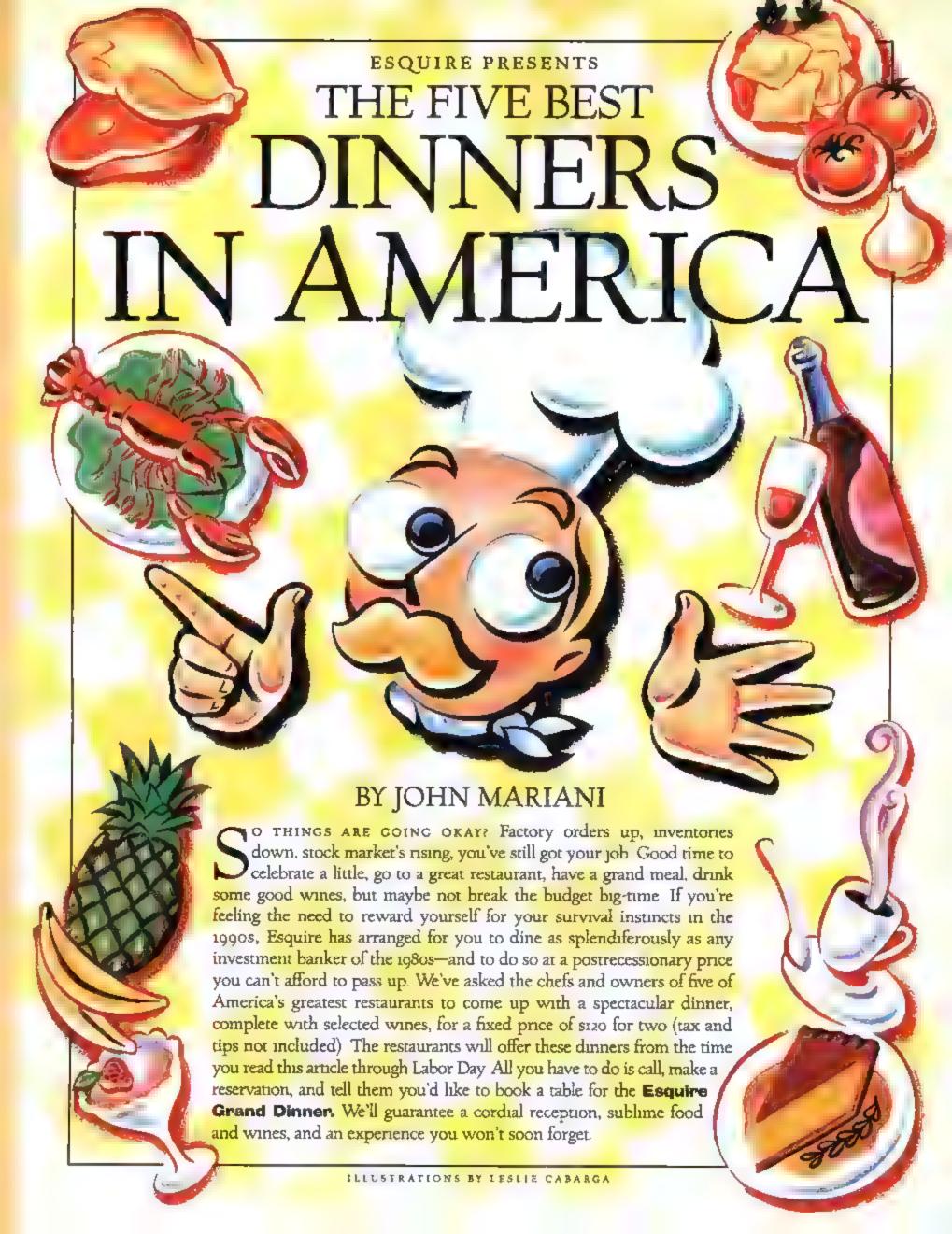


Sandy Milne, "is whether His Majesty gave anyone else a sniff

of the stuff



The Glenlivet.
The Father of All Scotch.





ABOVE PENNY WOLIN, BOTTOM RIGHT

CHRISTOPHER IRION



## MODERN ITALIAN: SAN DOMENICO IN NEW YORK

F ANYONE STILL THINKS THAT ITALIAN RESTAURANTS CAN'T MATCH THE RADIANCE AND REFINEMENT OF THEIR FRENCH COUNTERPARTS. DINNER AT SAN DOMENICO SHOULD CHANGE HIS MIND. ESQUIRE'S RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR WHEN IT OPENED IN 1988, SAN DOMENICO STILL SETS THE STANDARD FOR MODERN ITALIAN CUISINE IN THE U.S. THE SLEEK LINES OF THE DINING ROOM. THE TERRA-COTTA COLORS, BURNISHED WOODS, AND MARBLE

FLOORS EXEMPLIFY CLASSIC ITALIAN STYLE OWNER TONY MAY (BELOW, LEFT) ALWAYS FERRETS OUT THE MOST VOLUPTUOUS SINGLE-VINEYARD BARBARESCO, THE MOST AROMATIC WHITE TRUFFLES, THE RICHEST GREEN-GOLD VIRGIN OLIVE OIL—ALL OF WHICH CHEF THEO SHOENEGGER USES TO PRODUCE THE MOST MARVELOUSLY COMPLEX FLAVORS FROM THE MOST ADMIRABLY SIMPLE CONCEPTS



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LIBAIO AMBROGIO FOLONARI '91

AGNOLOTTI STUFFED WITH DUCK LIVER

RISOTTO WITH BUTTER, PARMIGIANO, AND BEEF GLAZE

BARBARESCO BASARIN-MOCCAGATTA

MINUTO '87
LOBSTER WITH CANNELLINI BEANS

AND ROSEMARY

ROAST SQUAB WITH SOFT POLENTA

ASSORTMENT OF RAW VEGETABLES

WITH OLIVE-OIL DIP

SAN DOMENICO DESSERTS

MOSCATO DEI VIGNAIUOLI GERETTO

COFFEE

CHRIS BUCK

MAY 1993 ESQUIRE 125





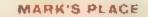
#### **NEW FLORIDIAN:** MARK'S PLACE

N MIAMI

AT A TIME WHEN MIAMI BEACH IS FLOCKED WITH PSEUDOTRATTORIAS AND POS-

ING SALONS THAT GO IN AND OUT OF BUSINESS LIKE THE TIDE, MARK'S PLACE IN NORTH MI-AMI HAS BEEN JAMMED EYERY NIGHT SINCE IT OPENED IN 1985 WITH A CROSS-CULTURAL CROWD DECKED OUT IN BEAUTIFUL CLOTHES AND RIVETING TAN LINES. THE PLACE HAS A RELAXED GLAMOUR AND A SEXY ENERGY THAT STARTS WITH DRINKS AT THE DELIBERATELY INTIMATE BAR. CHEF-OWNER MARK MILITEL-LO, WHO WON THE 1991 JAMES BEARD FOUN-DATION'S AWARD AS BEST CHEF IN THE SOUTHEAST, IS A MASTER OF SMOKING, GRIL-

LING, AND COMBINING SUCH CARIBBEAN FLAVORS AS PLANTAINS, MANGOES. CHILIES, AND BLACK BEANS WITH JERK MARINADES, GULF SHRIMP, AND SLOWLY ROASTED MEATS THEN HE PUSHES YOU OVER THE EDGE WITH SUMPTUOUS DESSERTS THAT BESPEAK PURE TROPICAL HEDONISM



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TEMPURA OF CRABMEAT-STUFFED SOFT-SHELL CRAB WITH SPICY CUCUMBER BALAD

TRIMBACH GEWÜRZTRAMINER, ALSAGE, '89

GULF SHRIMP AND WILD MUSHROOMS PRAPPED IN WEST INDIAN PASTRY WITH GREEN PAPAYA

MATANZAS GREEK CHARDONNAY, SONOMA VALLEY, '90

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COFFEE

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THERE SEEMS LITTLE DEBATE AMONG FOOD CRITICS AND CONNOISSEURS THAT JOACHIM SPLICHAL IS THE MOST IMAGINATIVE CHEF IN L.A., AND PATINA IS A MECCA FOR THOSE MORE INTERESTED IN WHAT'S ON THEIR PLATE THAN IN WHO'S SITTING AT THE NEXT TABLE. THERE'S NEVER A CLICHÉ ON Splichal's menu, always a novel twist that other chefs wish THEY'D THOUGHT OF FIRST AND ARE SURE TO COPY AFTERWARD. HE

LOVES TEXTURAL CONTRAST AND KNOWS PRECISELY WHICH WINES GO BEST WITH SUCH COMPLEX FLAVORS AS SHRIMP WITH PINK-PEPPER OLIVE OIL CHRISTINE, SPLICHAL'S LOVELY WIFE, IS A CONGENIAL CONTRAST TO MOST L.A. MAÎTRE D'S, AND A TABLE AT PATINA-A SHADOWY WHITE ROOM WITH MINIMALIST DECOR-OFFERS AN INTIMACY NOT EASILY FOUND IN THE BRASHER EATERIES ALONG MELROSE





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LAYER CAKE OF LAMB WITH RATATOUILLE AND BASIL SAUCE

GALERA, PATINA LABEL PINOT NOIR, CENTRAL COAST, '90

ASSORTED CHOCOLATE DESSERT PLATE

PETIT FOURS

COFFEE



THIS PAGE DALE BERMAN, OPPOSITE PAGE ROBERTO SANTOS

#### NEW CREOLE: EMERIL'S IN NEW ORLEANS

HESE DAYS JUST ABOUT EVERYONE VISITING THE CRESCENT CITY WANTS TO EAT AT EMERIL'S-OUR PICK FOR BEST NEW RESTAURANT OF 1990-A DRAMATIC AND CONVIVIAL DINING ROOM IN THE WAREHOUSE DIS-TRICT, WITH HIGH CEILINGS, A WOODEN WALL STUDDED WITH WINE CORKS, AND EXPANSIVE ABSTRACT ARTWORK EMERIL LAGASSE, WHO WAS BORN IN NEW EN-GLAND OF PORTUGUESE ANCESTRY AND WAS FORMERLY CHEF AT COMMANDER'S PALACE, HAS, THROUGH TALENT AND SHEER ENERGY, COME TO SYMBOLIZE THE STYLE AND SPIRIT OF NEW ORLEANS'S YOUNG CREOLE CHEFS, WHO NOW COPY

TURED BREADS AND ROLLS, HIS PEP-PERY ANDOUILLE AND BOUDIN, HIS GAME DISHES AND DESSERTS THAT GO WAY BEYOND THE FORMULA RECIPES FOR BREAD PUDDING AND SWEET-POTATO PIE.





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STAG'S LEAP CABERNET SAUVIGNON
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J.K.'S CHOCOLATE SOUFFLE
WARM BREAD PUDDING WITH
WHISKEY BAUCE

HOMEMADE ICE CREAM

LATE LEAP LE BAISER MAGIQUE COFFEE



JOHN CHIASSON



Kielbasa
Smokea with garlic and peppers, usualty
served with sauerkraut. Probably shouldn't
be caten before a romanic interlude.



Bockwarst

Some experts feet graling burns the outside
and leaves the inside raw, so they suggest
baking. Would this, then, be bakedwarst?

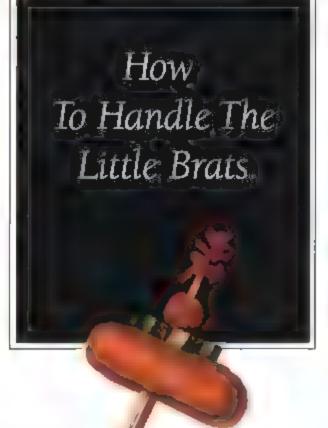


Bangers

Popular at breakfast, but not exclusively,
the mighty Spartans showed their manly
prowess in biting contests of hanging i nks.



Hot Dog
Invented by Anton Feuchtwanger who cailed it a
frankfurter Lucky us If he was less modest, we'd be
eating Feuchtwangers and Beans.



If you re careful not to smother a

bratwurst with condiments, you'll

its hant of fresh berries and crisp

f nish, it offers a retreshingly

even the biggest brats

SUTTER

HOME

find tasty substences best drawn out by Sutter Home White Zinfandel With

clean taste that comptements

That Chicken Sausage
A true hot as n HOT!) dog. Chile peppers
onginally used as a preservative make
these dogs bite back

Big at Roman orgies, they were banned as

symbots of debauchers. Bootiegging of these

"Bad Boys of Meat" became rampant



Linguisa

Portuguese, with red peppers and
gartic Good dived in eggs cut in chanks,
or shewered over burning coals
It's not easy being a sausage

SUITER HOME IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO II, DO IT RIGHT







homemade Superman cape and threw his then-pudgy body out the secondstory window of his project back in Leeds because he deemed it unthinkable that he couldn't fly-talk about his life, you sense the utter impeachability of his words. That once he glimpsed "the diamond in myself back in Leeds, where he spent his time cleaning the house while his mom and granny did the same in other, bigger, white people's homes, he never lost sight of it. The notion was already unshakable back when Charles was still at his hometown high, just six two but deep into the two hundreds. Except there was this Bobby Lee Hurt and he was six nine, the best player in the state with a dozen colleges sweettalking his mom and dad, and things looked swell for Bobby Lee Hurt until Charles salted his tail to the tune of twenty-five points and twenty rebounds and the plaid-suited recruiters scratched their heads and said: "Who was that fat boy?" It continued at Auburn, where those crackers figured the only way to hype the program in football country was to make Barkley into some kind of pizza-devouring freak. They called him Boy Gorge and the Crisco Kid, and CB went along because even then he understood he'd get the ink and how the ink translated into money and besides, he could play, good enough to get voted the Southeast Conference Player of the Decade. And his early days with the Sixers, when he got up on a chair and told Julius, Moses, Bobby Jones, Cheeks, Andrew Toney, no disrespect (because Charles would never disrespect great players), but the fact was that they were playing rotten, that they needed a team meeting and he, CB, who would wind up being better than all of them, was calling that meeting. This inner tranquillity persists even as Charles spends his evenings grinding faces belonging to Karl Malone and Derrick Coleman into the hardwood courts of this great nation.

"It's very simple, being me. There's none of this light and dark. I'm not looking to bullshit anyone," Charles says, sitting in his therapy pool. Yet even if that's bullshit you're happy to be with Charles because people like him, so serene and purposeful and grateful for those qualities, are hard to find. It's like what he told the Phoenix TV station that had asked him what he wanted for Christmas, Charles unfurled his mighty

bite-you grin and said, "Not a thing, My Jayson Williams's game." life is a gift."

This doesn't mean that Charles will not present a full-blown, closely reasoned treatise on the life and times of so-called Bad Chuck. "All that crap from last year," he says, referring to the unfortunate streak of misadventures, starting with the galling spitting incident, which wound up getting him traded to Phoenix, "that was about losing," Charles says with a semisigh, pleading a what they hear and what they read." kind of temporary insanity.

"Everyone is always screaming like I made those things happen, staged them or something just to make the Sixers trade me," he says. "That's a lie. I love Philadelphia, and I love the Sixers. I'd have done anything for the Sixers. I never said anything about my teammates I wouldn't say about myself.... But we stunk, Management wasn't trying to win. I was like Custer back there, riding into the massacre every night. Losing like that, it preys on your mind . . . "

HEN CHARLES, displaying a savant's recall for dates, goes back through recent Sixer history, detailing management's succession of boneheaded plays. Most prominent of these is "June 16, 1086" (intoned with a somberness reserved for Pearl Harbor Day), which was when Harold Katz, CB's former boss, divested himself of Moses Malone and Brad Daugherty, enough talent to last a decade, for Roy Hinson and Jeff Ruland, a couple of guys with medical histories to make Florence Nightingale blanch. "June 16, 1986," Charles says again, as if conjuring a hex. Losing Moses was a blow. "Moses was like my dad in ball," Barkley recounts. "He taught me that it wasn't enough to just be good. He showed me how to play hard and that playing hard, like he did, was the real reward." June 16, 1986, was also the commencement date of Charles Barkley as the franchise of the Sixers, their paramount star and catcher of flak. Talking about this invokes one of Charles's set pieces, his rebuttal to the oft-trotted-out saw about why he has never been as valuable as Magic Johnson or Michael Jordan, i.e., the way really great players raise their teammates' level of performance. "Oh, yeah," CB winks. "Magic Johnson got to raise the level of James Worthy's game, Michael Jordan got to raise the level of Scottie Pippen's game. But I got to raise

[continued from page 93] seven put on a maybe-I'll-kiss-you-but-I-still-might- the level of Shelton Jones's game and

The specter of getting branded a loser, being some Ernie Banks who broke his ass every time out only to never wear a ring, was bad enough. But as for "the rest of that bullshit about me being such a had guy," Charles says frowning, "that was a matter of ... perception." By that Charles means, "People aren't as smart as they think they are or as they ought to be, because they believe

Charles's stormy and voluminous relations with the press in general are described by one Philly beat reporter, who sorely misses the old Round Mound, as "a battle of wits based on mutual need...he can't shut up and we can't stop writing whatever he says." For eight years, Charles was the story, very willingly so. Go into any Barkley locker room and the scene more or less repeats: Charles sitting naked, two giant ice packs on his knees, dozens of reporters hanging on his every utterance, the rest of the players studying stat sheets, as solitary as if they were in the public library. In Philly things took a turn for the pithier following CB's Nineties-nigger explo late last season. "I'm a Nineties nigger!" Barkley declared after a loss to the Bulls, "The Daily News, the Inquirer, have been on my back. Everything I do is wrong. They want their black athletes to be Uncle Toms. I told you white boys you've never heard of a Nineties nigger. We do what we want to do."

"I just wanted those rednecks to know how I felt," Charles says now, amending his statement to allow that most of the Philly writers were "pretty good guys," even if "after all these years they still think of athletes as morons who can't think for themselves. All we're allowed to say is, 'I feel good cuz I played good, I feel bad cuz I played bad." Get serious. Writers are jealous of athletes. It's because of the money and the fame, but it's physical, too. It gets into this physical presence thing, if you know what I mean. But that's always how it's gonna be when most of the athletes are black and everyone else is white. So what else is new? It's a racist society. That's the truth, ain't nobody to dispute it. But what happens when you bring it up? They roast you, Slander you around. You're a basketball player, you're making big money, so stand there and take your medicine like a mummy. Just because I

supposed to be so fucking outspoken. I pick up the paper and see, oh, I'm popping off again \_\_\_ what'd I say this time? Uh-oh, I'm polarizing the community, promoting hate. I'm radical, the boogeyman, a reverse racist, the bad guy. . . . "

The making of athletic reputations, who's a good guy and who's a problem, is a thorny business for a black performer. This said, CB makes a very unconvincing black radical. First off-and how do you say this about someone?-if anyone seems, outwardly at least, a nonracialist, it's Charles. He stands there, this physical presence, and says, "People should be judged by their actions, how they live, not by what they had no control over-their race," and you just believe him. Charles says it's nobody's business that he married Maureen, who's white, and together they had a child (Christiana, the light of CB's life), just like it's nobody's business that now he and Maureen are separated-nobody's except Howard Stern, whom Charles, being Charles, would often call up to banter with about this jungle-fever thing; all of which goes to prove, Charles says, how easy he is about race.

Besides, on the issue of Barkley's being a radical, you'd have to look far and wide upon the ever-migrating Barkleyan position paper to find anything to the left of, say, George Jefferson. In Outrageous he recounts telling his mother that he's going to vote for George Bush in the 1988 election. "But Charles," his mother replies, "Bush will only work for the rich people." To which CB says, "But Mom, I am rich." His avowed admiration for Malcolm X ("someday I'll read that book") notwithstanding, Barkley appears to be of a distinctly Old Testament, eye-andan-ear-for-an-eye legalist bent. He tells you how Clarence Thomas got shafted by Anita Hill, that Ice-T ought to shut up since cops "are out there risking their lives," that Jim Brown allowed himself to be "eaten alive by his anger." On closer examination, however, it seems that in matters pertaining to public self-presentation, Charles, a fan of stand-up comics, adheres to the bottom line of Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke. According to Charles, this is the source of much of his media angst. They just don't get black speech, black manner. They don't get it, period. As proof he starts in on the Dream Team. "Fuck the Dream Team!" he shouts. "Someone made a fortune out spite all the upheaval about his weight,

have an opinion, about anything, I'm of the Dream Team! But not me! Not Michael! Not Magic! But fuck, we got to represent our country! Well, suck my dick, represent my country!" When he's sure he's got you laughing, he stops and says, "See, you put that in the paper and everyone's going to be going, 'You hear what he said about Dream Team? Barkley said the Dream Team could suck his dick!" You can't say anything without some moron thinking you mean it."

It must be duly noted, however, that Charles has a rather far-ranging definition of say anything. PC, CB is not. Charles, loud and quick, will bait anybody at any time. Back in Philly he was reportedly relentless in his labeling the underachieving-but-sensitive Armon Gilliam "Charmon." You sense a willful know-nothingness here. A couple of years ago, when after a bad performance Charles said it was enough to make you want to "go home and beat your wife," he claimed amazement when women's groups (which he'd said he wanted to "piss off") picketed some Sixer games. This can veer toward an uncomfortable doublespeak: On one hand, Charles bridles when people treat "me like a dumb athlete," but he can be quick to retreat to an "I'm only a basketball player" position. To wit: During the Olympics the Bad Chuck elbowed a poor Angolan in the midst of a Dream Team blowout and then said he had to do it. "How was I to know he wasn't carrying a spear?" This brought an ugly American whine down on CB's noggin, even if this was a pretty funny postmod remark, the sort only an African-American could get away with. However, told that the land mines set during Angola's civil war had blown off the limbs of a large segment of the population, that in fact it was surprising the country could field a team at all, Charles seems bereft. "Didn't know that," he says, upset. But then he gets testy and says, "Well, how the hell am I supposed to know a thing like that?"

Still, hanging with the Chuckster is no hassle. I mean, Charles will never high-hat you, even if you are a writer. He's a guy, you're a guy, so hey, let's be guys. Okay? You gather little Barkleyan fun facts. Like: Charles will never, ever be in a room where TV is not playing, and don't get "any stupid ideas" about how he "needs it" because he's "lonely or some shit," he just likes the box, especially The Young and the Restless. And: De-

Charles, who regards conditioning as "mind-set," never, ever works out. (Danny Ainge, skinny as a rail, can bench-press more than CB, one of the strongest guys in the league.) Also: Don't drop a crumpled cup in the locker room, or-worse yet-leave half-eaten food around, because then Charles'll be in your face like he was in Jerrod Mustaf's, scolding the third-year man like a schoolmarm, "Now, how much extra effort does it take to toss that cup in the proper receptacle?" "I just like things neat," says CB, who's been known to make his hotel bed

After a while, things can get salacious, like the time Charles said he was hungry. We were going to get Chinese, but after Barkley ran a red light in his Blazer ("oops") he decided Hooters would be better. Hooters is exactly what you would figure: chicken wings, ribs, and lots of chick waitresses in stretchy tops and satin shorts. Charles looked over the talent and beckoned, "You, little woman there." To which the chosen waitress, who turned out to be a twentytwo-year-old law student at Arizona State, said, "I am not little."

"Everyone is little to me," Charles

That tore it. Quicker than Veronica Lake, the waitress pulled a threeinch-thick candy cane from her belt and ran her hand over it. "Oh, yeah," she said, sassy with her power move, "how big is big?"

"Not that big," Charles replied, backpedaling slightly. Things went along more or less in this mode, CB gamely trying lines, the waitress beating his ass, until Charles asked the waitress if she had a boyfriend, "Sure," she said, now firmly in control of the situation. "But I just use him for sex." "Damn!" was all Charles could muster. "I get him over to my house," the waitress continued, leaning in, "and sit him in a chair at one corner of the room. When I want, I have him crawl over toward me."

With that, Charles gave in and looked the waitress in the eye. "I respect that in a woman," he said, sweetly. Charles changed his tune, however, when he saw his Boswell of the moment writing this last bit in a notebook. "I said nothing about the bitches!" Told the "respect" line was "pretty funny," Charles bit his lip and, true to this ethos, said, "Well, that's okay then."

After Hooters, we rode around in

downtown Phoenix for a while. The town, full of brand-new buildings and absolutely no people, looks like a munitions dealer's promo for the neutron bomb. "Kind of empty, Phoenix," Charles allowed. How did Charles take Valley, "the rich people's neighborhood," only three blocks from a golf course where the pro was going to help him get that ol' handicap down a stroke or two. Phoenix eventually blunt a bit off the Barkley attack? "Yeah," Charles cackles. "Good weather all the time, sellouts every game, the media on your side. It's rough, all right...." Charles seemed to want to ride a good thing. He wasn't too Hoppen hassle (in which he claimed that the Sixers were keeping the talentfree white man simply to avoid having the Phoenix club, a well-known haven for marginal palefaces, had a couple of white (non)players sitting at the end of the bench. "I ain't interested in taking anybody's job; those guys are nice guys," Charles said. Was this the new don'trock-the-boat Barkley?

This suggestion seemed to addle the Chuckster. "Look, nothing's changed. I'm just the same. Talking all the time, saving what I think. But I'm out here to win, that's why I left Philly. We got a chance the corridor, pausing as he always does now, and that's what's important."

And that was odd, because right then Charles, who for all his woolly outfrontness can talk and talk and give you nothing, got a tad plaintive, and it was possible to see him as a twenty-nineyear-old guy from a small town, sharp as a tack, but for all his pronouncements and honesty someone who's basically never done anything but play ball. And now the thing that has always been his gift has carried him very, very far: all the way to this strange place. But that's the gig, isn't it, when you're several crazed autograph hounds to Charles and the ring is close and you're desperate to win?

spot with Charles, because then we were there. "You just never know how things talking about what makes him afraid, if anything. "There ain't nothing for me to fear except failing . . . making a serious went toward his car, a wild-eyed automistake," he said. For Charles, the definition of a serious mistake . . . of being really bad, is "alienating your family or friends in some way that cannot be forgiven."

night, in L. A., Charles was in the locker room quietly introducing a surprisingly diminutive man in a bulky red sweater and gold-rim glasses as "my dad."

to wide-open spaces? "Fine, fine," he a wrenching quote from his mother, said, got himself a house out in Paradise Charcey Mae Glenn, detailing her marriage to Frank Barkley, how they were married young, how he left the family. "Frank Barkley is one of the few mistakes I've ever made in my life," Charcey absent and now returned to him Would the excessive laid-backness of Mae says. "The only good thing that through the sheer force of his own came out of it was Charles." The book goes on to detail Charles's vast pain at having to grow up without a father, how he came to think of the man as "evil because only an evil man would leave his wife and son." They didn't see each othinterested in rehashing the old Dave er for nine years, and relations were strained for some time after that, especially after Frank's initial attempts at contact following his son's emergence as an all-black squad) despite the fact that a famous person. These days, Charles says, things between them are better, allowing that reaching out hasn't been "easy, but something I really wanted to do." So there was Frank Barkley, a friendly-seeming, unassuming man in his middle forties walking around looking shell-shocked as Charles thundered about in his usual style after the most recent Phoenix victory.

"It's a madhouse," Frank Barkley kept saying as Charles walked down to sign every autograph, to pose with kids in wheelchairs. Maybe it was just the traffic flow, what with everyone lurching toward the Ninth Wonder of the World, or his own retiring nature, but Frank Barkley found himself shuttled back into the throng. Then Charles was getting in a giant limo with several very healthy-looking southern Californians. Before he got into the car, Charles craned his near-invisible neck above the crowd. "See you, Dad," CB said quietly, extending his arm through touch his father's arm. The door slammed and the limo pulled out, back-It was strange, getting to this tender ward, leaving Frank Barkley standing are going to turn out in this world," he said before shaking his head. As he graph hunter who'd obviously seen Frank Barkley in close proximity to the rambling. "You know, I love Charles. . . .

Which was weird, because the very next Charles is the greatest. Of course, I like Michael too, but Charles is my favorite. . . . I'd like to get with Charles, you know ... work for him even .... Frank Barkley tried to shake the guy but In Charles's autobiography there is couldn't. The two of them went off into the parking lot together.

> THE NEXT DAY, back in the whirlpool, Charles was still thinking about his father, so long celebrity. "You see where you come from when you see your dad," Charles said softly. "Everything's about the past and how you come to where you are," Then, as if to push the continuum. Barkley, whose present is so sublime, was thinking of the inevitable, "I know I'm gonna die someday, but I ain't afraid of it. If I die right this minute it won't matter, because I've trusted the way things have gone so far, all that's come to me." Just then one of those giant not-exactly-Bad-Chuck-but-close smiles came across his face. "Hey, Tom!" he called out to Tom Chambers, who had a towel wrapped around his bottom on his way to the shower. "Putting on some weight there, Tom?" Chambers, universally renowned as a dour sort, stops and pulls at the thin roll around his six-ten frame. "You play ten minutes a night, you'd put on weight, too," he says mournfully.

Charles watches him go, then shakes his head. "Ten minutes a night," CB says slowly, rolling over the concept. After all, it wasn't that long ago that Chambers was the star of the Suns, scoring twenty-five a night. Charles sits there a moment, says it again: "Ten minutes a night." Was that what the Mack Daddy of Hoop was thinking about: limitations, the claustrophobic ingress of boundaries, physical or otherwise? It's his standard line these days that he's "nowhere near" the player he was, that he plans to retire in "three years, tops," and when that happens he will "never break a sweat again." Then he usually goes on to say how he's already got the body of "a thirty-eight-year-old," which is how it goes after a decade as the first option on the offense and going all-out on the boards, "Ten minutes a night ..." he says, like it's a curse. "Some future." Then, lurching up like a massive and dark Moby Dick, Charles starts out of famous Chuck, came over and started the pool. Looking into the swirling waters, he says, "Well, fuck the future." n

D

#### Fashion

Man At His Bost, page 45: Calvin Klein Collection sweater (1550) at Bergdorf Goodman Men. New York; Barneys New York, New York and Chicago, Calvin Klein stores. Dallas and Cleveland. Calvin Klein Collection trousers (\$275) at Calvin Klein stores, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, and Cleveland; Neiman-Marcus, Atlanta; Saka Fifth Avenue, San Francisco and Costa Mesa, Califor-113a. For information contact: Calvin Klein, 205 West Thirty-ninth Screet, New York, New York 10018.

And Away We Go, page 130: J. Crew swimsuft top (144) and bottom (136) at J. Crew stores nationwide, For informanon call 800-562-0258. Island Trading Company umbruits. (148) at Island Trading Company, New York. For information contact: Island Trading Company, 15 East Fourth Street, New York. New York 10004

On page 131: Iceberg swim trunks (sos) at Adam Ross/ Clappers, Cleveland and Princeton, New Jersey; Syd Jerome, Chicago, Theodore Man, Beverly Hills. For information contact keberg, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10151. J. Crew bikini top (a36) and bottom (a26) at all J. Crew stores nationwide. For information call 800 562 0258. J. J. Hat Center hat (120) at J. J. Hat Center, New York For mformation call 800-622-1911. Gottex with trunks by special

order only. For information call 800-225-7946. On page 182: Chaps by Ralph Lauren T-shirt (122) at Macy's, New York; Dayton Hudson and Lazarus, nationwide. For information contact: Chaps by Ralph Lauren, on Park Avenue, New York, New York 20016. Pierre Cardin awin trunks (220) at Hecht's, Washington, D.C.; Strawbridge & Clothier, Philadelphia; the Broadway, Los Angeles. For information contact Roytex, 16 East Thirty-fourth Street, New York, New York 10016. Biltmore but (145) at J. J. Hat Center, New York; Meyer the Harter, New Orleans: Hat Village, San Diego For information call 800-265-8382. Omega watch (\$1,395) at Joseph Edwards, New York; select Bailey, Banks & Biddle stores: Benbridge throughout the West Coast. For information call 800-766-7642. Vestimenta whirt (\$195) at Louis, Boston, Boston; Nicolas, Toronto; Lawrence Covell, Denver. For information contact: Vestimenta, 30 West Fifty-sixth Street, New York, New York 10019. J. Crew ######### (\$38) at J. Crew stores rutionwide. For information call 800-562-0258. Ruff Hewn Tshirt (\$24) at Belk, Greensboro, North Carolina; Laurance Clothing throughout Maryland; Dillard's, Phoenix. For information call 800-723-7833. Nautica awim trunks (\$37) at Island Pursuit, Nantucket and Edgartown, Massachusetts; Dillard's, San Antonio. For information contact: Nautice International, 40 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York, New York 10019. Biltmore hat (\$45) at J. J. Hat Center, New York; Meyer the Hatter, New Orleans; Hat Village, San Diego. For information call 800-165-8182. Citizen watch (\$595) at fine watch

mores nationwide. For information call 800-321-1173. On page 155: Island Trading Company whirt (178) at Island Trading Company, New York. For information contact. Island Trading Company, 15 East Fourth Street, New York, New York 10003, Barnes Storm shorts (155) at Neiman-Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Bloomingdale's, nationwide. For information contact, Jhane Barnes, 575 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10018. J. P. Tod's thous (\$175) at Diego Della Valle, New York; Fred Segal, Beverly Hills. For information call 800-457-8637.

On page 134: Canali uport Jacket (1795) at Tyrone. Cedarhurst, New York, Cuzzi International, Hartford; Bernini, Beverly Hills. For information contact Canali USA, 9 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York, New York 10019. J. Crew swimmult (\$34) at ]. Crew stores nationwide. For information call 800-562-0358. Gabrielle Sanchez currings (\$170) at Arrwear, New York. For information consict Arruear, 456 West Brasiliany, New York, New York 10012.

On page 186: Reiss London west (195) at Camouflage, New York; I. K. Don, Chicago; Roppongi, Los Angeles, For information contact Aubrey Company, 80 West Firtieth Street, New York, New York 10018. Boss, Hugo Boss Journs (\$130) at B. Wallace & Co., Myrule Beach, South Carolina; Mettler's, Sarasota, Florida: Lenzo, Los Angeles. Breitling watch (\$1,175) at Orologio, Paramus, New Jersey; Reynolds & Company, Winter Park, Florida; Currents Fine Jewelers, Vail, Colorado. For information contact: Breiting USA, Inc. 2 Stamford Landing Stamford, Connecticut 06:902. Basco shirt (\$125) at Barneys New York, New York; Marshall Field's, Chicago, Fred Segal, Beverly Hills. For information call 212-

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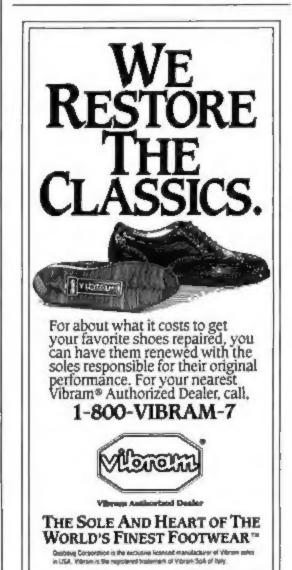
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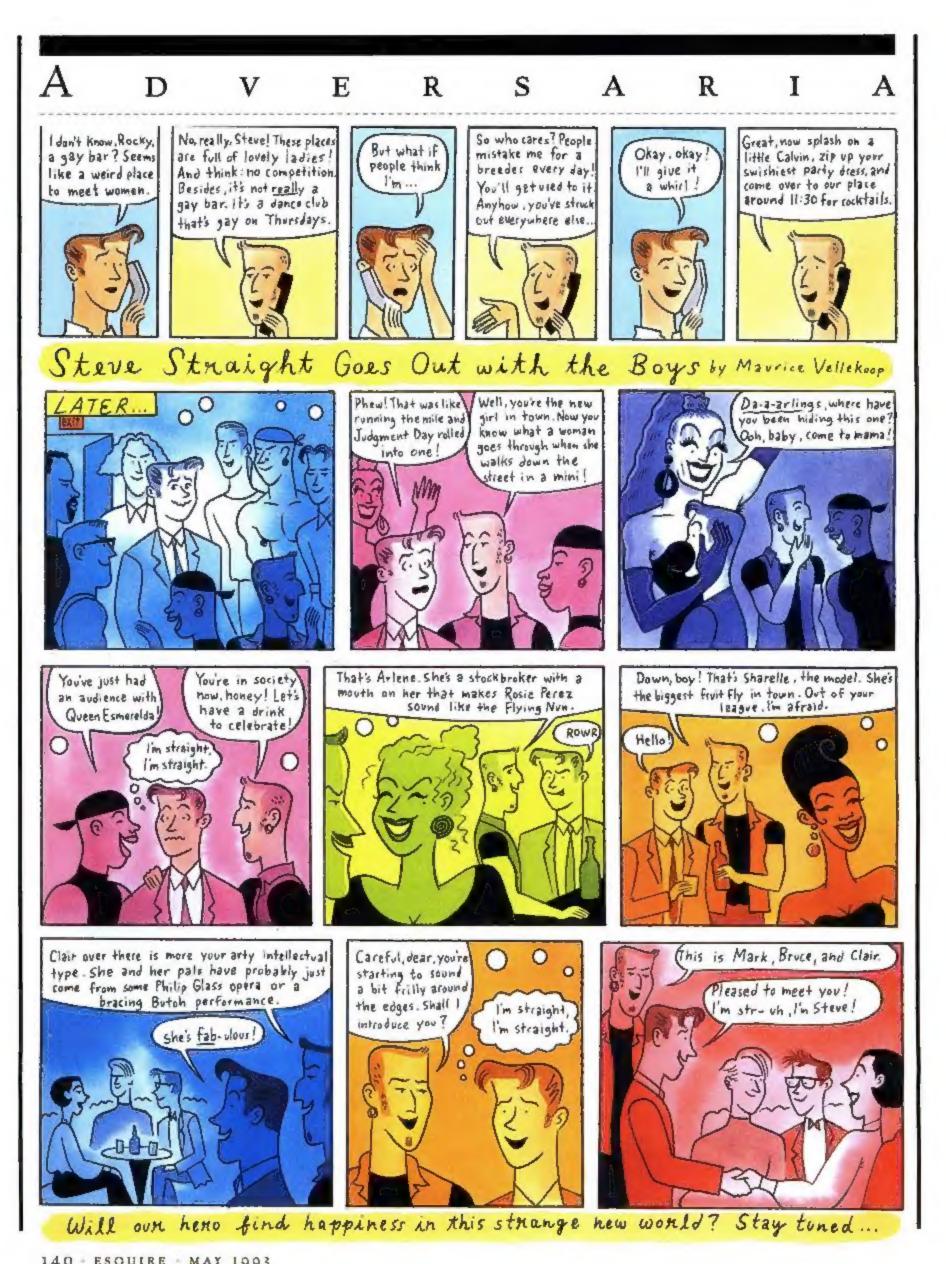
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